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DÉDICACE

Ce projet est dédié aux créateurs de danse passés, présents et futurs qui cultivent la conscience kinesthésique et l'empathie, ainsi que les capacités d'adaptation et de collaboration à travers leur pratique corporelle.

This project is dedicated to past, present and future dance makers who cultivate kinesthetic awareness and empathy, and the skills for adaptation and collaboration through their embodied practice.

AVANT-PROPOS

Developing new ideas is challenging work. This research creation caused me to learn and transform as I delved deep into the impact of my choices on others. Periodization and Devising offered pathways to nurture new ways of engaging with practice and with collaborators.

With this research, I endeavored to address and deconstruct the intricate problem solving processes that dancers employ when presented with complex tasks assigned by a choreographer.

How to train responsibly train for what we seek to do with our bodies? What tools engender dancers trust and creativity; what structures support the work when the answers aren't yet clear? How can I stay connected to my body as I observe others? How can I create situations that generate shifts in perspective and understanding inside a project? How to design structures that creates space for embodied experimentation and learning?

While I trust in the unconscious and unknown to generate the content of an artistic work, I sought the support of conscious planning and clear articulation of goals to facilitate and clarify it. The action plan of strategic planning, training and communication required curious and engaged collaborators and I was lucky enough to find them. This research tested a dramaturgy of structured processes, practice and play and it feels like an adventure that has only just begun.

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RÉSUMÉ

Itérations - Périodisation artistique pour une création durable est une création de recherche intégrant des outils d'entraînement périodisés, de documentation et de communication lors l'intérieur des répétitions. Les stratégies testées dans cette recherche visent à générer notre capacités à créer du temps pour la récupération et l'intégration, ainsi qu'un espace pour la résolution de problèmes dans le cadre d'un processus créatif en danse. L'objectif de production du projet était de créer et de filmer une œuvre de danse en direct, en utilisant un langage chorégraphique hybride modulé par des outils d'improvisation. Les stratégies testées pour atteindre les objectifs performatifs étaient l'utilisation d'une pratique du mouvement à multiples facettes comme point de départ du travail, modulée par la durée, l'intensité et la programmation en utilisant les principes de la périodisation non linéaire et le 'tapering' (effilage). Des techniques de conception, des discussions et de la documentation ont été incorporées pour faciliter une communication et une collaboration transparentes autour de la prise de décision relationnelle et artistique. Cette recherche permet de constater que l'inclusion d'entraînements et la distinction entre les différentes phases du processus de création étaient des manières efficaces de faciliter le travail des danseurs et de créer un environnement collaboratif. Elle conclut que certains aspects des modèles sportifs et théâtraux, bien qu'ils portent en eux un potentiel considérable, requièrent des adaptations pour le domaine de la danse. Cette recherche est une pré-étude visant à investiguer et à développer des pratiques durables qui répondent aux besoins biologiques, psychologiques et artistiques des danseuses indépendants engagées dans le processus de création d'une pièce de danse contemporaine

Mots clés : Recherche création, processus de création, périodisation en danse, hybridité en danse contemporaine, durabilités en danse, collaboration, création somatique, praxis hybride

ABSTRACT

Iterations - Artistic Periodization for Sustainable Creation, researched incorporating periodized training, documentation, and communication tools into a rehearsal creation. The artistic goal of the project was to create and film a live dance work incarnating multidimensional femme archetypes, using a hybrid choreographic language modulated by improvisational tools. The strategies tested in this research creation aimed to generate intertwined interpretive and physical abilities to achieve performative goals. A multi-faceted movement training praxis created a departure point for the work. This practice was used to generate material inside of rehearsals and parameters for improvisations. Rehearsal activities were scheduled using non-linear Periodization and Tapering, that modulated intensity and duration to create time and space for recuperation, integration, and problem-solving inside of the creative process. Devising techniques, discussions, and documentation were also incorporated to facilitate transparent communication and collaboration around relational interactions and artistic decision-making. This study found that including progressive training and communication practices inside of a rehearsal process was effective in facilitating dancers' work and creating a collaborative environment. It concluded that some aspects of sports and theatre models have potential but need to be adapted to the specific challenges of dance performance, such as memory and stamina. This research is a pre-study aiming to investigate and develop sustainable practices that support the biological, psychological, and artistic needs of independent dancers engaged in the creative process of devising a contemporary dance piece.

Keywords : Research creation, creation process, sustainability in dance, devising, collaboration, periodization in dance, hybrid dance practices, Somatic creation, Praxis, Affordances, Hybrid training

INTRODUCTION

Embodiment is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2012) as a 'tangible, visible form of an idea, quality or feeling'... Embodiment, as a verb, suggests agency – the capacity and capability of human beings to act intelligently and expressively through their bodies (...) How do dancers become embodied to serve artistic purposes? By what processes do dancers become *more* embodied? Arriving at a context - specific definitions of embodiment, bear on the integrity of praxis research. (Batson & Wilson, 2014, p.74)

At their essence, dance creations are generated by embodied humans interacting with their environment in the present moment. The perceptual and physiological processes manifesting as dance require awareness and exertion on the part of those incarnating the work. However, the biological and psychological efforts and needs of dancers are rarely given the same consideration as aesthetic goals and production values, even though optimal performances have a huge impact on how work is performed and received. To quote dance scientist Matt Wyon.

A rehearsal or dance could last indefinitely, as perfect movement quality is impossible to attain, but it is up to the rehearsal director or teacher to recognise the point at which the quality of movement starts to become compromised, and rather than encourage the dancers to try harder, give them a break. (Wyon, 2015, p.70)

How mental and physical challenges are dealt with in dance practice is intimately linked with the achievement of artistic goals.

Unless the physiological dancer is honed to the same extent as the artistic dancer, the limiting factor in their development will potentially be their physical conditioning. To deny the physiological needs in training today's dancers is to deny development of the art form. (Rafferty, 2010, p.48)

The specific content and goals of training and the development of the art form are open for discussion, but to support the artistic demands of dance, the athletic and cognitive aspects of the dancers' tasks need attention. Currently, there is little consideration given to dancers training by independent choreographers. The biological needs of the people manifesting this art form in real time are largely ignored, undervalued and exploited, while other aspects of performances are prioritized. Art as commerce reflects a capitalist

model which emphasizes short-term production cycles, resource extraction and refinement, with little acknowledgement of the intrinsic value of the organic systems generating and manifesting the work in time and space, or care given to sustaining them. (Mies & Shiva 2014, Cools 2014, Browne 2017).

J.J. Gibson's coined the term « affordance » to signify the process by which organisms make use of the elements in their environment as resources. Natsoulas commenting on Gibson concept explains "To see things is to perceive what they afford. [...]. These affordances are properties conceived of in relation to an animal, but this does not mean that their existence depends upon the animal's perceiving them." (Natsoulas 2004, p.323), From an ecological perspective, ecosystems generate resources which living organisms utilize for their survival. Not only do resources have inherent value, but stewardship of an affordance, is mutually beneficial for both organisms and affordances. The notion that exploitation not only harms resources, but also the organisms reliant on them, is a simple concept that capitalist systems struggle to grasp on a global scale and that dance creation needs to come to terms with in practical ways. Framed more positively, stewardship of an ecosystem, requires ensuring the integrity of interdependent processes vital to the functioning of organisms and resources generated within it. This research focuses on how this concept can be applied to independent contemporary dance making. Choreographers rely on dancers to embody their ideas, while providing them employment and opportunities to perform their art. Given this interdependent relationship where both roles are the primary resource on which the other's art and livelihood depend, creators would do well to cultivate a symbiotic relationship with performers. One of the ways this can happen is by structuring creations and productions in ways that do not harm, and instead cultivating wellbeing and facilitating sustainable labour. This work begins by acknowledging and making visible all the tasks currently assigned to dancers, and then exploring ways of redistributing, enabling, and engaging in these processes symbiotically. Building on research sourced from Dance, Dance and Sport Science, Dramaturgy, Somatics, Aesthetics, Ecology, Sociology, Neurophysiology, Ecology and Feminist, Phenomenological, Marxist and Pragmatic philosophers, I will argue for paying attention to and nurturing the invisible elements that facilitate dance making. This approach to sustainable creation informs the foundation of my research, as it applies to my choreographic, teaching, and performative practice.

CHAPITRE 1

CONTEXT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins by looking at historical and current factors contributing to a culture of *overworking* that permeates Western contemporary concert dance. Tracing conventions descending from balletic traditions as practiced in pre-professional institutions and companies, despite the infiltration of Somatic techniques into both training and creation. I will make the case that the instrumentation and objectification critiqued is symptomatic of larger trends in western, post-industrial culture and late-stage capitalism. The text will then examine the specific challenges impacting independent choreographers and dancers based in Montreal, including my own experience. Scrutinising the social and physical risks and challenges innate to creating collaborative dance works, and emphasizing the importance of building trust, using communication and empathy to create supportive environments so that people are able to thrive and fully engage in creation and performance (Smart 2014).

The overriding theme of this research explores ways in which the working culture of Contemporary dance can transform to nourish dance artists' short and long-term careers goals, and personal wellbeing. Informed by Sylvie Fortin's collection, *Dance et Santé*, dance scientists Matt Wyon and Sonia Rafferty, scholars Glenna Batson and Margaret Wilson's work on dance and cognition; Melanie Bales and Rebecca Nettl-Fiol's, Johanna Bienaise and Manon Levac's articles on the integration of somatic practices in contemporary training methods support this exploration. This investigation of alternative methods, adapts the concept of *Periodization* from sport and *Sustainability* from ecology, in combination with Guy Cools and Jackie Smart's approaches dramaturgy, to the context of dance making. The chapter concludes with an overview of how strategies used in this research address the disconnection between training and rehearsing in the content, organization and scheduling of an independent contemporary dance creation process and production. Reiterating the need to align these activities more sustainably for dance practitioners, I hope this research will contribute to the realisation of creative and artistic goals in optimal ways for dance makers.

1.2 Personal Experience

As a member of several dance companies and independent projects, I have often been overworked and not given enough time to recuperate during long work days in the pursuit of ephemeral goals. Experiences which resulted in serious physical and psychological injuries that persist to this day. The research of dance scientists, Matt Wyon and Sonia Rafferty into common training and rehearsal practices, points to excessive repetition of coordination patterns and overly long rehearsals as contributing factors to high levels of overuse injuries among professional and pre-professional dancers. Matt Wyon observes, the subjective pursuit of perfection has no limits, while the human body does. The failure to recognize this fundamental reality is responsible for dancers “ overtraining symptoms such as decreased performance and susceptibility to injury. “ (Wyon, 2010, p.67). These practices can create a negative feedback loop by depleting dancers’ physiological and psychological resources, causing injuries from exhaustion and overuse, and performances shy of their full potential. This then provokes critical feedback from outside eyes, which in turn can negatively impact the performance of choreography by eroding individual and group confidence and creating negative self-talk (Buckroyd 2000, Batson & Wilson 2014).

At times as a dancer, I felt unprepared for, while simultaneously overworked by the process of creating, rehearsing, and performing certain choreographic works, like a robot expected to reproduce choreography exactly night after night, while simultaneously delivering mesmerising performances. Conversely, I have also had the responsibility of both inventing and performing open ended works, with vague but demanding compositional parameters, and little to no dramaturgical support. In both instances, rather than engaging in concrete work to generate desired qualities, the choreographers created abstract aesthetic expectations and critiqued dancers’ efforts to realize them. Delegating appropriate time for activities which built up coordination and rhythmic patterns, physiological capacities, theatrical intentions and facilitating open dialogue around questions or problems, could have expedited dancers’ work while enabling the choreographer’s vision. My research turns on the idea that preparation and performance are inextricably linked and that precedents exist in other domains that could be used in dance. Specifically that sport has developed intelligent methods to prepare athletes progressively for physical and mental tasks, and that theatre artists engage in open dialogue about the work they cocreate, and actively engage in practices to build trust between collaborators.

1.3 Overexertion: Formal Training & the Dance Culture of Pushing Past Boundaries

Professional dancers need a personal practice which sustains their physical artistic craft. This practice is often informed by what dancers are exposed to during their formal training, in combination with how their own needs and sensibilities emerge over time in relation to the work they are doing. The conditions in institutional dance training, such as pre-professional programs, do not necessarily reflect professional independent circles, yet they set up habits and attitudes deeply ingrained in dancers' ways of being. The culture of perfectionism and overwork prevalent in dance conservatories often manifests in the scheduling of too many consecutive activities with insufficient time for recovery, forcing young dancers to ignore their exhaustion and push past healthy limits. "Body neglect, an extreme version of functional effacement where people learn to go numb in order to accomplish a task". (Gallager & Cole, 1995), is a necessary capacity to survive the rigor, fatigue, and pain of their physical experience as professional dancers. This masking of lived experience to embody their work, makes dancers susceptible to injury due to missing and ignoring their bodies' warning signals. « *La notion de fatigue, cause principale de blessure en danse, est par exemple un bon paradigme pour explorer l'entrelacement des différents facteurs bio-psychosociaux dans l'approche de la santé du danseur.* » (Dumont, Kadel, etc. 2016, p.8).

Ineffective practices that both over and under train, along with unclear goals cause difficulties in the dance creation and performance. They create a negative feedback loop, because chronic fatigue leads to a listless movement quality, referred to as 'staleness' in sport (Wyon 2010, quoting Morgan 1987). *Staleness*, the term for lacklustre performance due to exhaustion caused by overwork and insufficient recuperation time, can make students or professional dancers appear lazy and unmotivated, causing teachers and choreographers to become frustrated and push them further. Dancers' fastidiousness, lack of voice and denying of physical realities can create unhealthy working situations that are counterproductive to optimal performance over time. (Dumont, A., Kadel, N. Brunet, N. Colombié, J.B., Lewton Brain, P. et Couillandre, A., (2016). This is absurd in the context of an art form that relies on physical sensations, feelings and cognition, as important components of interpretation in creation and performance. This problematic reality is further compounded by the dominant approach to health and wellness in a milieu, that places the onus for dealing with injuries resulting from fatigue and overuse solely on dancers - despite the fact they cannot control contributing working conditions, particularly their relentless schedules (Fortin, 2009, p.31).

Within these blocks, daily schedules need to be organized so that all the teachers know what their colleagues are doing in each of their classes. This will prevent the students from being exposed to a series of intensive classes back-to-back, or day-to-day. At its most basic level, periodization dictates that no student can work at a high physical or mental intensity all the time and still develop technically and physically. (Wyon, 2015, p.70)

Despite the predominant culture of overworking dancers within well-funded institutions, large companies and pre-professional training programs, often do have resources to support training activities, such as staff that guide cross training, technique classes, rehearsal directions, physical therapy, and individual coaching. These contexts could simply adjust the scheduling of training and rehearsals and the ways methods are used within them. For optimal performance, athletes require a surplus of endurance, power, and strength, both Wyon and Rafferty quote studies showing that cardiovascular capacities in professional dancers are equivalent to sedentary populations of the same age. Rafferty's research points out that dance classes and rehearsals include a lot of stopping and starting, meaning that despite their long hours of physical activities, dancers' aerobic stamina tends to be poor. This phenomena is exacerbated by habits tied to maintaining low body weight, such as smoking and poor nutrition. She recommends adding exercises which target aerobic and anaerobic stamina, coupled with appropriate rest to dancers' activities. If cardiovascular stamina was cultivated it could improve performance because aerobic power decreases the demand on the anaerobic system during high intensity, "allowing the dancer to work longer at lower heart rates before becoming fatigued" (Rafferty 2010, 47) and creating a surplus of energy and attention for focusing on interpretive tasks in performance. Wyon recommends taking a global view of all the tasks asked of dancers throughout their daily/weekly schedules and the provision of training for all the elements of fitness, not just coordination, flexibility, and mobility, because exceeding dancers' physiological capacities is currently a contributing factor in the occurrence of injuries in performance.

1.3.1 The Impact of the Culture of Over Exertion and Perfectionism

Dance training institutions can do damage to the psychological wellbeing of their students by demanding they submit rather than assert their limits and agency,

The strategies used to attempt to meet the standards for low body fat and perfect execution actually impede optimal performance because it diminishes dancers' ability to concentrate, drop into a flow state and collaborate effectively. This is also worrying because of the lack of self-care which seems to be a common result. (Buckroyd, 2000, p.200)

Sports and dance scientists site attention as key to success in elite dancer/athletes. The quality of attention is affected by a sense of ease and ability to rule out unnecessary distractions. Elevated expectations in dance often undermine performance, by creating too high of an attentional load, while also conditioning dancers to integrate self-criticism, and undermining their confidence and focus.

Motivation, expectation, emotional threats or rewards and many other psychic phenomena compound the relationship between mental and physical effort (Kahneman 1973; Lamme and Roelfsema 2000; Sarter, Gehring and Kozak 2006; Van Gaal et al. 2012). The degree to which one can control attention correlates with states of effortlessness and improved performance. (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). Mental effort tends to increase as demands to improve performance increase, or performing conditions remain unduly challenging. (Batson & Wilson, 2014, pp.109-110)

Batson and Wilson also point out that “constraints include choreographer’s goals” and “aesthetic demands take priority. Leaving dancers to suppress their kinesthetic sensations and personal goals” (Batson & Wilson, 2014, p.111). This training to ignore one’s sensations and desires erodes healthy boundaries, putting dancers at risk for exploitation. The highly competitive nature of the dance profession, exacerbates these phenomena by adding pressure to comply and strive to meet demands at any cost because dancers, especially women, are easily replaceable.

La prise volontaire de risques, si elle est vécue avec plaisir et sentiment d’autocontrôle lors de conditions de créations optimales peut être expérimentée tout autrement par un corps blessé, fatigué ou en déficit de contrats. Par ailleurs, si la satisfaction du dépassement est partagée par le chorégraphe et les danseurs, les conséquences du risqué sont davantage portées par les interprètes. À cause de la précarité du travail, les interprètes, surtout les femmes, hésitent à dévoiler la pénibilité du travail aux chorégraphes. (Fortin, 2009, 33)

The ways in which we work with and against our psyches and bodies in dance are full of complexities and contradictions:

Que penser de la discipline, du contrôle et de l’auto-surveillance que s’imposent les danseurs au quotidien afin d’assumer l’engagement corporel et les excès requis par leur forme d’art? En épousant l’attitude de responsabilité individuelle propre au discours dominant en santé et en affichant une acceptation silencieuse de la fatigue, de la douleur et des blessures qui portent atteinte au corps, les interprètes ne freinent pas les actions collectives qui pourraient être bénéfique à la communauté. (Fortin, 2009, p.34).

The culture of perfectionism which permeates the milieu can create a hyper vigilant control and instrumentation of the body which breaches and ignores its protective mechanisms.

Selon l'une des chorégraphe interrogées, qui a d'ailleurs tenu à préciser que la culture du silence n'est pas une réalité particulière au milieu de la danse, mais bien à l'ensemble du marché du travail en général, les chorégraphes portent en tant que employeurs, la responsabilités d'ouvrir le dialogue afin de contrer ce phénomène. (Fortin, 2009, p. 59)

As expressed in the quote above, the culture of silence is not unique to dance, but I would venture to say that an extreme version of it exists in dance culture. Like many workers, for dancers to remain employable they must find ways to silently endure the rigors required of them. As well, both choreographers and dancers are products and inheritors of hierarchical systems that doesn't encourage dialogue, and as such both may lack the confidence or skills to initiate constructive communication. Personally, I have experienced situations where the competitive dynamic between dancers was used to play us against each other, in order for the choreographer to maintain power and be able to push us further. Healthy leadership is not always modeled in dance environments or work environments in general, but in independent dance creation there is no department of human resources to report to.

Les danseurs sont également nombreux à mentionner les conditions de tournées, les locaux mal chauffés et les planchers de ciment sur lesquels ils doivent souvent danser, particulièrement les plus jeunes, sur la voie d'une reconnaissance à venir. Leonetta dénonce les conditions de travail des danseurs dans un milieu hautement compétitif et financièrement précaire. (Fortin, 2009, p.29)

To paraphrase this quote in English: this competitive and exacting environment where technical production is given more consideration than dancers' physical wellbeing is rendered even more hazardous, given most dancers' financial precarity. Psychologist Julia Buckroyd (2000) and academic Sylvie Fortin (2009), point out that when students and professional dancers are cut off from their physical impressions and distrust their subjective experience, they must then rely on external sources such as the mirror or other's comments to measure progress. The reality makes them vulnerable to manipulation or damaging feedback from rehearsal directors, teachers, and choreographers, and susceptible to body dysmorphia from their own internalised hyper critical gaze. If dance practice became more adaptable to the natural ebb and flow of biological needs, the process could potentially cultivate physiological and psychological resilience and health, preventing the current trends of pushing people towards injury and/or eventual burn out. There is a precedent for this type of planning in the previously mentioned holistic sport training method known as *Periodization*, which I propose to adapt to a creative context in my research creation.

1.3.2 Dancers as Expendable Workers - Considering the labor, timing and value of training

The larger picture of dance artists working today within changing artistic practices, harsh economic conditions and under-regulated labour conditions is that dance has to re-look at itself and in this moment of reflection, ask, 'what now?' and 'what next?'. (Wooky, 2014, p.274)

In recent years, the spectrum of skills asked of dancers has expanded exponentially, at the same time that long-term contracts with companies are disappearing, and short-term projects initiated by independent creators are increasing. Most contemporary dancers are independent artists for hire, who create their training from a collage of influences (Fortin 2009, Bienaise and Levac 2016, Shusterman 1997, Bales 2008). To be employable, the contract worker must consistently commit to train their body in a variety of ways. The responsibility to maintain the skills and capacities necessary for the embodiment of dance falls to underpaid, overworked independent dancers, with choreographers benefitting from them, but doing little to acknowledgement or support their investment in the training process. This quote speaks to the low income of professional dancers in Quebec.

Au Québec, les dernières données dont nous disposons révèlent qu'en 2000, pour 63% des interprètes, les revenus provenant d'activités professionnelles en danse se situaient légèrement au-dessus du seuil de la pauvreté (Group DBSF, 2002). Les artistes cumulaient souvent plusieurs emplois, ce qui explique que 28% du salaire des interprètes provenait d'activités autres que la danse. De leur revenu, quelque 1 500\$ étaient annuellement consacrés au traitement des blessures. (Fortin, 2009, p.10)

Independent professional dancers in Montreal and abroad are not lacking for training options and are aware of the benefits of complementary training. Accomplished dancer, Lucie Vigneault's attests to the benefits of being able to choose training techniques that support preparation for distinct types of work:

les périodes comme pigistes fait en sorte que je vais chercher autre chose, par exemple des périodes où je danse beaucoup avec Frédèrick Gravel, j'étais porté à faire du Perfm¹, parce que je savais que ça demander une espèce de base ou est-ce que je peux rapidement changer de côté, ou est-ce qu'un cardio, et une certaine force aussi dans les jambes. Là ces temps-ci, j'ai commencé depuis quatre mois à faire plus de yoga, puis ce n'est pas une technique que je faisais beaucoup avant, puis là je sens que ça m'aide ...là c'est plus des blessures. On dirait que le chemin est fait selon aussi l'histoire du corps et l'histoire de c'est quoi la période, là, que ce que j'ai à faire. (Lucie Vigneault, Entretien avec Bienaise et Levac, 2016) [00:20:33]

¹ PERFM¹ is a high-performance fitness training center for athletes and the public that offers personalized conditioning programs supervised by kinesiologist trainers. (Survivingdance.ca)

Lucie's comments reflect how many independently employed dancers appreciate the freedom to choose how they train their bodies in relation to the contracts they accept. What is not mentioned, is that preparation for the work could be supported by their choreographer/employer taking it into account and adapting the timing of rehearsals and the activities within them. It is widespread for companies to opt to hire temporary workers, in lieu of the cost of fulltime employees.

A Statistics Canada study shows the share of gig economy workers in Canada is increasing — a trend that one economist says is worrisome. The report from the federal agency released on Monday found about 1.7 million workers, 8.2 percent of the Canadian labour force aged 15 and older, did some form of gig work in 2016. That marks an increase from about 1 million workers in 2005, 5.5 per cent...David Macdonald, senior economist at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, said the trend is worrisome given the precarity of such work. "The model of employment in the gig economy is very different from what we would consider 'good jobs' he said. "Which is to say you've got a contract; you pay into traditional programs like employment insurance and the Canada Pension Plan, and you've got some benefits at work. This is very much outside of that".²

Unlike other industries, where self-employed workers can decide their own hours and operate remotely, dancers under contract do not have the same agency over schedule and location. In Quebec, organisations like *Regroupement Québécois de la danse*, *Studio 303*, *CCOV*, the *MAI* and *Circuit-Est* provide resources to the independent dancers and choreographers of the dance community, and some choreographers pay into *CNESST* which can cover the costs of health care due to injury. However, in general the organisational and fiscal responsibility of adapting preparation and training; as well as covering the health care costs for injuries that result from the work, falls to dancers.

La majorité des danseurs qui composent le milieu montréalais de la danse contemporaine ont un statut de pigiste. Contrairement aux danseurs salariés dont l'entraînement quotidien est partiellement pris en charge par les compagnies, les danseurs pigistes sont eux-mêmes responsables de leur entraînement en termes d'options de pratique, d'horaires et de coûts et bénéficient plutôt d'un soutien du Regroupement québécois de la danse... Plusieurs d'entre eux mentionnent le peu de temps disponible pour l'entraînement et la difficulté à évaluer leurs besoins afin de répondre aux projets chorégraphiques auxquels ils participent. (Fortin, Trudelle & Rail, 2008, p.19).

² <https://ipolitics.ca/2019/12/16/gig-economy-work-in-canada-is-growing-stats-can-says/>

As a dance artist, I have experienced the trade-offs between being a company member, independent dancer, and choreographer. In my first few dance contracts with professional companies, we were offered daily classes which prepared us for the choreography, but the pressure and expectation to attend them five days a week felt oppressive when I was tired, injured or my body craved other types of movements to contrast company repertoire. My individual experiences are echoed by those of my peers and by the latest research in exercise and dance science, specifically studies in dance and health in the professional milieu done by UQAM's Dance Department, as well as dance scientists in England, America and France (Wyon, 2014, Rafferty 2014, Ferré, J. et Leroux, Ph. 1996, Dumont, A., Kadel, N. Brunet, N. Colombié, J.B., Lewton Brain, P. et Couillandre, A. (2016) & Fortin 2009) find the standard company and institutional training practice of the same class 5 days a week is outmoded and damaging. Although an instrumentation of the body is also common to athletics, sport acknowledges physiological realities and strives to work with them to achieve optimal performance. As previously mentioned, this is often accomplished through holistic periodized training programs that include modulating schedules and recovery periods are designed and implemented progressively in relation to quantifiable goals, Bompa (2003). Contrastingly, professional independent dance training is disconnected from specific artistic goals and approached in a half hazard, individualistic way. Physical challenges are overcome through sheer will, intuitive preparation, and repetition, instead of strategic holistic cross training that reflects dancers' total workload.

Les professionnels de la santé observent que les blessures viennent très souvent du fait que le chorégraphe ne tient pas compte du niveau de fatigue ou d'entraînement des danseurs. Ainsi, les blessures surviennent parce que les répétitions sont menées de façon excessive jusqu'à ce que les mécanismes de protection du corps soient dépassés. Parfois, le temps n'est pas utilisé de façon efficace car le chorégraphe ne s'est pas bien préparé avant la rencontre avec les danseurs, ou bien parce qu'il souffre d'indécision chronique. Ainsi, beaucoup de temps sera perdu à revoir les mêmes mouvements au lieu d'utiliser ce temps pour optimiser la performance des danseurs. (Fortin, 2009, p. 218)

The repetition involved in exploring ideas is an essential part of the choreographic process, but this should not let choreographers off the hook for considering the impact of these activities on the dancers working for them. Current realities necessitate that creators acknowledge dancers' energy expenditure both inside and outside of rehearsals, including their travel time and investment in training and treatment. Even though company class is a rare occurrence within independent contemporary dance practice, I feel that choreographers spending time preparing some form of pedagogical warm up would connect them to their own physicality and deepen the choreographic research. This in turn would forge common ground, enabling everyone to feel the creative possibilities and challenges inherent within physical explorations.

Investigating the preparation for choreographic language would also help creators identify complementary and compensatory practices that could support the work and seek appropriate expert advice on the types of cross training and recuperation to integrate into and around rehearsal schedules.

1.3.3 Overworking in Production Schedule

Scientific studies show how commonplace dance training and rehearsal practices can result in the instrumentation and injury of dancers' bodies in the pursuit of aesthetic goals (Fortin 2008, Wyon 2015, Rafferty 2015). A 1988 study by Michel Perrault (Fortin 2008, 10) reported that injuries in professional dancers were equivalent to rates reported by professional athletes in contact sports and chronic injuries were 5 times more prevalent than injuries due to accidents. The commercialization and professionalization which prioritizes *product over process* impacts how rehearsals and performances are scheduled. Professional sports that do follow a more periodized training program for their athletes, also sacrifice appropriate recovery time for profit - negatively impacting physical health and shortening athletes' careers as a result.

In cases when fundamental principles of periodization are violated, the training process is chaotic, and a tight competition schedule limits the athletes' possibilities in terms of preparation, rest, and recovery after important tournaments. This situation often occurs in elite tennis players ([Liszczenk 2014](#)). The people responsible for the organization and development of team games (at the national and international level) follow a policy which is oriented towards the commercialization of these sport disciplines. As a result, talented young athletes are often forced to end their careers in a particular team sport at an early age. A high number of competitions often causes overreaching, overtraining and increases the risk of injury. (Kinet, 2016, p.179).

The same phenomenon can be observed in professional artistic productions. Consideration for performers' wellbeing is rarely given the same importance as production requirements, but this lack of concern affects the quality of performances in the short term and the length of dancers' careers in the long-term.

Le travail effectué tard le soir et l'apprentissage de nouveaux mouvements constituent des situations à risque. Ces chiffres poussent à réfléchir à la présence de causes organisationnelles, par exemple concernant les horaires de travail. (Fortin – Ledoux, Ouellet, Cloutier, Thuilier, Gagnon, Ross 2009, p.200).

Long and unusual hours, unsuitable floors and fatigue from travel significantly affect the dancing body, and although aspects of this reality are unavoidable if dance continues to be produced as it currently is, strategies can be used to incorporate *Tapering* into production schedules. Wyon (2010) suggests shortening rehearsals in the build-up to performances and minimising repetition by using video to give notes.

1.4 Integrating Somatics - The Fine Line between Awareness and Hyper Vigilance

In the post-Judson church era (Batson & Wilson 2014, Bales and Netti-Fiol 2009), dance artists are seeking to develop and amplify their physical and mental awareness, abilities, and sensations. With the integration of *Somatics* into technical training in Contemporary western concert dance there is an emphasis placed on listening and responding to internal and external stimulus. Simultaneously we train to control and refine our responses down to minute details.

“Self-regulatory skills rarely are achieved by imposing rigid methods of self-talk and control without paying a price (an increase in mental-physical fatigue and a decrease in coordination, for example). Among the possible models for training, some suggest a shift away from conditioning toward more somatic movement-based techniques” (Batson and Schwartz 2007). (Batson & Wilson 2014, p. 113). Yet within the context of hyper vigilance of one’s physicality, a somatic education can be additional layer of self-disciplined perfectionism, as opposed to a means by which to approach dance in a more sustainable way. The somatic skills of receptivity and articulation offer potential for incorporating recuperation and integration in to process, but also risk morphing into self-control and instrumentation on a profound level. Rather than approaching training and rehearsing as a means of managing every moment, dancers need to develop their capacities for receptivity and adaptation to be able to drop into and sustain a state of flow (Batson & Wilson 2014). There is a fine line between generating a state in the moment and manufacturing a reasonable facsimile of it, however the difference between representation versus embodiment is crucial distinction. How can authenticity and craft come together. We need to find systems which help dancers to generate material that is specific, but paradoxically create scores that are flexible enough to adapt to each new present moment and where there is room to make ‘mistakes’ and embrace the unexpected.

1.5 Communication

Choreography that utilises performers’ lived inner experience necessitates clear communication. It is important that we find words or symbols to accompany felt sensations that correspond to the desired

visual or performative effects, to promote verbal clarity as material is refined, as well as agency and responsiveness in performers. Marie Chouinard, Meg Stuart, Benoit Lachambre, and Ohad Naharin are examples of choreographers who have developed systems for working with interpreters' phenomenological experiences to generate their choreographic works. In developing preparatory Syllabi (as recommended earlier), these choreographers are also involved in naming and differentiating tasks and states that they themselves have experienced, creating shared physical and verbal vocabulary. As a choreographer and teacher, I have become aware over time that my subjective artistic and ethical intentions need to be responsive to what emerges from the interactions of people in the studio, and this is what is provoking my interest in researching appropriate training support and clear communication. This motivation is also related to challenging experiences as a professional dancer and student, already outlined, that could have benefitted from direct and empathetic communication.

I am in the unique situation of having had my choreography analysed from the interpreters' point of view, and this research addresses challenges outlined by the interpreters' involved in an early stage of a creation process. In 2008, Johanna Bienaise used the first research phase of my piece, *The Shallow End*, as the basis for her master's thesis examining the experience of four interpreters in a choreographic process, as well as audience impressions of work-in-progress showings. Her analysis identifies codified choreographed vocabulary and improvisational structures, as two distinct entry points to the work for the dancers; and the use of imagery as a unifying strategy to give intention to space, time, and quality of movements for the interpretation of both approaches. Bienaise names the inherent interpretative challenge of working with two different types of attention and presence, on one hand voluntary, active choice making, while on the other authentically performing set choreography (Bienaise, 2009, pp.87-88). In *The Shallow End*, I was interested in showing the multiple and fragmented layers coexisting within the constructs of individual female identities. In retrospect, I could have communicated my objectives more clearly and better prepared the dancers' for generating and transitioning between various modes of thinking, sensing, and moving. Sylvie Fortin and Pamela Newell have identified executor, interpreter, participant, and improviser, as four distinct roles for dancers within a creation process, in their article *Dynamiques relationnelles entre chorégraphes et danseurs contemporains*. I have asked the artists I have collaborated with to perform all four functions, but dancers in my work are most often interpreting (modulating set choreography) and participating (generating content within specific parameters).

The executor role corresponds more closely to the sport model of the optimization of a specific prescribed task. This means that the concepts of periodization and recuperation I am borrowing from sport needs to be adapted to an artistic paradigm involving improvisation and somatic states, to create a wide range of coordination possibilities and open-ended interpretive results.

Because independent dancers rarely have access to conditioning training conceived specifically for the capacities in choreographed work, monitored by a trained professional, they have rarely built up their anaerobic and aerobic capacities or a reserve of power and strength over the rehearsal process. This is compounded by the lack of appropriate rest that could also create a reserve. Since show preparations usually involve longer hours than usual schedule, they are the opposite of the reduction of tapering practices that athletes use to conserve energy and optimize performance. This increase in energy expenditure is another factor increasing the likelihood of dancers getting injured during performances.

Ceux qui craignent que cette approche ne conduise à une diminution de la richesse chorégraphique se trompent, car c'est plutôt le contraire qui, fort probablement, se produira : un meilleur respect des principes scientifiques de l'entraînement conduira à une élévation du niveau de performance du danseur et, ainsi, à l'accès à un plus grand répertoire au plan gestuel. (Fortin, 2009, p.218)

Alongside the necessity for physiological fitness, aesthetic and perceptual preparation of dancers is rarely included as a part of the rehearsal process by independent choreographers. There is, however, a desire for cohesion of style and prowess, that is addressed later in the process as '*cleaning*', which tends to rely on dancers' effort in response to critical feedback and demands for repetition that can lead to overuse, injuries and fatigue. Expecting interpreters to arrive prepared for anything is an impossible task which I have known as a dancer and sought to avoid as a choreographer. Rather than taking on the role of critic inside their own work, choreographers could watch videos with dancers to provide clarity around what they want in relationship to the what the dancer is doing. This inter-relational object could provide the basis for clear dialogues identifying and clarifying desired qualities, so that editing and coaching material could proceed more efficiently and constructively. This suggestion by Matt Wyon (2014) could potentially go a long way to facilitating both choreographers and dancers' work. *Iterations* builds on this hypothesis, and investigate ways of developing a strategic periodized cross training program, cultivating desirable qualities broken down into fundamental skills that build physical and/or perceptual capacities.

As a teacher, I have witnessed dancers generate stunning work in class, as they are primed to create, interpret, and react to their environment and each other. Dancers arriving at rehearsal are not necessarily in this state and have not shared a common, transformative experience. Which leads me to question why the actions and practices taken inside this dance technique class exist so separately from the rehearsal process. In training together, you can build the sensibilities and capacities you desire in the work.

Class is very close to a creative process, all that needs to be added are the cognitive processes, collective work and problem solving that takes place in rehearsal, as well as space and time for recuperation and integration. To address this, I plan to begin research for the project using with a multi modal training praxis, that will adapt as the piece emerges. Having identified that rest and agency are often absent for dancers within rehearsals, I want to allot time for recuperation and communication within the creation. Using a *Research Action* methodology, the project adapts to what is learnt from the process. For this reason, I want to set aside time for open dialogue that can be used to create clarity in terms of goals, empathy and understanding individual challenges.

The cardiovascular and cognitive aspects of dancers training are often neglected; and I am hoping that by practicing specific skills as well ways of transitioning between them, I can facilitate these aspects of the work. I want to see how integrating training practices that reflect the large spectrum of post-modern dance technique alongside athletic conditioning, impacts dancers experience and the realisation of my work. This research also tests what are effective ways of incorporating time for recuperation and rest into schedules and how this impacts everyone from performers, technicians, and collaborators, as well as my own choreographic experience.

My desire to explore innovative approaches to dance practice arise in response to the pervasive practices outlined in this chapter, where choices are imposed with little facilitation for the internal and cognitive work. I want to parse out the invisible labour that both choreographers and dancers do during different phases of devising a choreographic work. As a researcher and choreographer, I am curious how intentionally structuring a research creation and developing capacities within it, will impact the experience of the process and the performance itself, for both dancers and me? I hope this research will point to new ways of realizing aesthetic and ethical goals, improve my choreographic, movement and leadership skills, create a creative and valuable learning and artistic experience for dancers; and eventually benefit others sharing similar creative and human challenges and goals.

1.6 Artistic Motivation

The artistic research motivating *Iterations*, is a desire to respond to the themes proposed by *The Shallow End* from the vantage point of 14 years later. When *The Shallow End* was presented in an evening of my work at Tangente in 2009, I was 7 months pregnant. I have since experienced motherhood, returning to studies and mentored students of all ages. *The Shallow End* was an examination of my own experiences of feeling fractured from internalised instrumentation and objectification. As a dancer and younger women, I felt my worth was dependent on the validation of others. As I age, I am wrestling with the currencies of beauty, body image, charisma and sexuality often associated with female identities in western society and the dance milieu in new ways. One review of the work stated that I had succeeded in critiquing the status quo, but hadn't offered any substantial alternatives. With this new work, I am interested in investigating integrated power that comes from within, but that is interconnected with the larger world, going beyond individual identity. Tapping into the deeper, ancient intelligent forces at work in the cyclical unfolding of life, that are powerful, adaptive, life generating and destroying. The improvisation structures used investigate ways of directing attention and awareness into micro and macro perspectives, as well as daily states of awareness.

I am drawing inspiration from the archetypal images and concepts contained in Tarot and the ways they manifest in popular culture and everyday existence. Rather than creating a work that is a feminist critique of popular and dance culture, I am interested in investigating what grounded, connected power looks and feels like. Giving space to embody the states of Femme strength often negated by dance and popular culture. The world has shifted in complex ways in the past fourteen years with extreme improvements and setbacks. The emergence of social media, data mining, surveillance, AI, imminent climate crisis, rise of fascism, alongside growing movements for inclusion, decolonial actions and expansion of gender and sexual identity and climate justice are contexts that compel to add my voice to the waves of statements looking to move culture forward in progressive, inclusive, and authentic ways.

1.7 Research Question

Given my desire to respect the short and long-term well-being of dancers, I asked myself the following questions:

How to sustainably design and structure the rehearsal process for a devised Contemporary dance creation to support the well-being and contributions of performers and optimal realization of the piece?

1.7.1 Sub - Questions

How does prioritizing preparation, scheduling, communication, and recuperation inside of rehearsals impact the dancers embodying the work?

How does including strategic planning and training, as well as ongoing dancer feedback impact the choreographic process?

How can capacities be developed, space made for recuperation and embodiment and empathy be encouraged? What impact do these practices have on the performances and sustainability of the work?

What are the other by-products or benefits of this type of process for participants, other than the performances?

CHAPITRE 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

As a dance maker, I situate my practice within the web of hybrid influences found under the umbrella of Contemporary dance. Much of dance history seems to simultaneously co-exist and at times cross-pollinate within this form. Its practices and influences stem from western codified techniques such as ballet, modern and contemporary, movements in other art and philosophical disciplines and diverse cultural traditions from around the globe, including current styles of urban dances. In the wake of postmodernism, it also includes somatic practices, improvisational scores, physical theater, political performance art, and interdisciplinary work integrating video, visual and sound art. Important decolonising work is currently beginning to happen, as people reflect on the cultural appropriation of technologies stemming from dance histories that precede and exist simultaneous to western concert dance. This necessary movement towards inclusion and representation will not be explored in depth in the context of this research, other than to acknowledge that the hybrid influences contained within what is currently known as contemporary dance are multiple and overlapping. The focus of this section is rather to look at the gulf that exists between techniques that focus primarily on external form and approaches that prioritise somatic sensation.

2.2 Hybrid Approaches in Dance

From the 1970's to the end of the millennium, dance and Somatics, found a common ethos through directed kinesthetic awareness of movement dynamics. Initially, however, the primary intentions differed between the two. Dance arguably aimed towards aesthetic expression and Somatics toward health and wellbeing (Volkers 2007). Perhaps because of these different intentions, the pedagogy diverged for quite some time. Placing sensory awareness in the foreground was radical in more traditional western contemporary dance pedagogy. Dance training drew from conditioning methods – copying the teacher, memorizing steps, and repeating and reinforcing steps and phrases, often in front of mirrors. While these methods still have validity today, at that time, a culture of rigor prevailed in which becoming a true artist was linked to the degree of physical and emotional suffering endured. (Batson & Wilson, 2014, p. 6)

This quote from *Body and Mind in Motion*, summarizes the paradigm divergence between the culture of rigor versus foregrounding sensory awareness. I have encountered the clash between these differing perspectives throughout my career and to this day in teaching and professional projects. This quote articulates the false dichotomy that aesthetic expression is at odds with health and well-being, and the prevalent idea in both elite dance and sport that rigor is synonymous with some level of suffering. “Many athletes become ‘broken’ and for those who are not yet, surely there are only so many ‘bashes’ they can take before they too succumb. We might question why this remains a dominant metaphor in high performance sport.” (Rynne & Mallet 2014, p. 3). In fact, the ability to endure pain for the price of beauty or art seems central to many peoples’ conception of dance as an art form. While in wellness spaces, the prioritization of felt experience can limit movement and dynamic range. This research into *sustainable artistic periodization* is based in the idea that training and rehearsing can be demanding without being damaging, that there are existing methodologies in global dance practices, sport, theatre, and facilitation for moving dance beyond the default practices of mimicry, mirrors, repetition, and criticism; and for exploring somatic range, with our eyes open while moving energetically through space.

In this section, I will share the foundations of my research strategies integrating somatic, collaborative and health promoting approaches into the structures of creation. This research adapts the progressive training concept of *Periodization* from Sport to physiological and psychological aspects of creation, and the more egalitarian collaborative method, *Devising* from theatre into the preparation, creation, and production of dance. Both are employed as a means of providing resources and stewardship into an artistic ecosystem of dance creation processes. Investigating a hypothesis that: nurturing these aspects contributes to the sustainability of dance artists’ practice and careers; and that consideration of artists health and well-being benefits the embodiment and kinesthetic communication of the work in studio and performance.

2.3 Paradigm Shifts in Dance Transmission

In *Pédagogues de la danse, Transmission des savoirs et champ chorégraphique* (2015) Marie- Pierre Chopin focuses on individuals and philosophies that have influenced the development of the western concert dance cannon. Her research reveals that the dichotomy between somatic work and formal technique has existed throughout the history of expressionist/modern/contemporary/postmodern/new dance, with significant artist educators renouncing the status quo because of its hierarchical power structures and instrumentation of the body.

As early as the 18th century, artists such as Noverre (1727-1810), moved away from mechanized virtuosity in search of the meaning behind everyday gesture. In the 19th and early 20th century important artists like Wigman, Duncan, Delsarte, Fuller, Dalcroze were urging dance to transcend technical formalism and embrace what we would now refer to as Somatic experience. Chopin exposes how Rudolph Laban's insights spurred a deeper analysis of the functional to aesthetic components of movement, promoting efficiency, ease and alternance within mechanized movement in factories, as well as training in dance. Dewey and H'Doubler proposed a humanist version of movement education that was more experiential than aesthetic that they brought to university education in America. Amid the massive cultural shifts in the late 60's and early 70's, dance artists renounced virtuosity and formalism for movement that valorised internal sensation and everyday gesture, drawing influences from both martial arts traditions (Leonidivna & Kostyantynivna, 2021) and voguing culture. The echoes of this movement reverberate throughout the art form to this day. Looking at these cyclical patterns, Chopin differentiates methods of transmission into profiles of teaching styles useful for understanding the different archetypal approaches to both technique and repertoire.

2.4 Types of Dance Teachers and Choreographers

1. **Le Passeur/The Transmitter:** An individual with a formalized training affiliated to a certain school, scene and/or expert teacher, spends time fine tuning the technique and then passes it on with their alterations to their students.
2. **Le Garant/The Guarantor:** strives to pass on the technique as it was originally conceived.
3. **Le Témoin/ The Witness:** a dancer close to a choreographer, who passes on their philosophy and physicality when they are gone.
4. **Le Novateur/ The Innovator:** breaks with tradition in terms of their pedagogy and artistic creations.
 - a) **Innovators** create a '**rupture**' in terms of *conceptualization of movement or compositional principles* (Chopin 2015, 65), form new schools/ companies based on their philosophy.
 - b) **Hybrid** – An innovator at the point of intersection between different art forms, and/or between tradition and innovation within a specific discipline.
5. **Le Batisseur/The Builder:** works at community or political levels on 'social conditions of professional work' (Chopin 2015, 77) institutions & support structures (funding bodies).
6. **Théoriciens/The Theorist:** names aspects of a dance practice that are utilised, but not yet articulated, creating common vocabulary and methods of analysis generating paradigm shifts, and transforming the ways in which dances are viewed, used, and understood.

In Chopin's model many of the well-known modern choreographers of the 20th century were *Innovators* and *Builders*, such as: Mary Wigman, Maurice Béjart, Martha Graham, José Limon, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, Eric Hawkins, Alvin Ailey, (Chopin 2015, Bales 2007, Fortin 2009). Not only did they develop their own techniques to train dancers for their specific styles, but their work also led to the creation of schools, companies, and a specific approach towards dance. Despite bearing the name of an individual, these types of arts organizations are never built by one person alone. The dancers working with *Innovators* are *Witnesses* to their work, and approach disseminating the technique and repertoire either as *Guarantors* preserving what they perceived to be the true form of the work, or *Transmitters* adding their own ideas to the original.

In my experience, the *Guarantor's* approach can become obsessed with stylistic details of the exterior form, to the detriment of the core ideas of choreographer's research. The *Transmitters* who engage with the heart of the work and add their own insights help to keep the essential ideas alive and evolving, so that each generation does not have to '*reinvent the wheel*', or conversely get caught up in an archival project, but focus rather on the spirit of the perceptual innovations, sensorial inner workings that led the creation of technique in the first place.

In *In-Between Dance Cultures*, Guy Cools identifies the currency of originality and innovation in western art markets, as influenced by the capitalist model of production. He distinguishes between improvisation and innovation, "creative acts translate and embody new information." (Cools 2015, p.32), that may be in the collective consciousness of the time and not just the creation of an individual. Movements and ideas coalesce inside of individuals, but have their source in the Zeitgeist of society at large. "The concept of "originality" is even more problematic because it denies all influences and pretends that the creative act is its own origin." His subjects, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan merge their influences. "I privilege a relational dance in contact with the outside world following up on one's masters, in a contribution." (Cools 2015, 23, Akram Khan). An artist can be someone who renews the investigation of their predecessors, evolving knowledge, while preserving and passing it on. Cools describes how "Khan's choreographic process has evolved to include his major influence the Kathak technique, as well as his sense of rhythm and ability to create an illusion of speed, while also making space for his dancers' individual interpretations of the technique in relation to their own somatic identities." (Cools, 2015, p.95). He notes that in the early

to mid-20th century choreographers passed on their somatic signature through their choreography, while artists like Pina Bausch and Alain Platel starting using the identities and idiosyncrasies of their dancers to generate their work. Where once choreographers created pedagogical exercises to develop the essential pre-abilities for their choreographic aesthetic, the tasks of generating and remembering material is now often shared by choreographers and dancers, or solely by dancers. Here is a well-established Montreal choreographer commenting on the lack of appropriate technical training for her dancers.

L'exigence des créations en ce moment, fait une sorte que les danseurs n'ont plus le temps, ni l'énergie physique nécessaire pour s'entraîner en classe technique. Fais qu'ils font plus un travail de, je n'utiliserais même pas le mot somatique, de prévention, de préparation et de prévention. Puis dans certain cas, je vois comme un affaiblissement de leur technique, dans, je le vois même dans ma compagnie là. Je trouve ça triste quand je vois ça, mais les travaux chorégraphiques sont tellement exigeants physiquement, tu regardes tout le monde au Québec, tu regardes le travail et tu dis c'est tellement exigeant pour le corps. Moi, je sais que les danseurs chez nous, ils disent qu'on n'est pas capable de faire une classe avant une répétition, c'est trop d'énergie, c'est trop demandant puis ça me questionne beaucoup ça... Parce que je ne suis pas dans le genre de 'Il faut que le danseur fait sa classe technique', mais il y a quelque chose qui manque dans la préparation. Il y a quelque chose qui est dangereux là-dedans, qu'ils n'aient pas la préparation juste ... mais les classes techniques ne sont pas toujours de bonne préparation pour un travail. (Daniele Desnoyers en entrevue avec Levac & Bienaise, 2016)

As previously stated, the elevated expectations placed on dancers are often realised through instrumentation and competition, as opposed to the facilitation as in sport, or negotiation in theatre, which are contributing factors in the overworking that goes on in rehearsals. Choreographic goals aren't always defined, nor is there a clear path to prepare for them. Instead, dancers expend considerable amounts of energy guessing and adjusting without acknowledgement of the energetic toll this process takes on them. Pushing people to exhaustion is counterproductive because it leads to diminishing returns in performance. The functional effacement in the body leads to dancers numbing and masking their kinesthetic experience and the loss of emotional affect to the detriment of their interpretation on stage. This in turn disappoints the choreographer, who then critiques performance undermining dancer's confidence and psychological resilience. If preparatory training practices to achieve choreographic goals were anticipated by choreographers, they could potentially reduce stress and fatigue in dancers, optimizing the creative project as well. Sensations and emotions comprise the rich territory at the heart of the human experience which dancers at their best have the power to generate, amplify and transmit.

A renewed involvement of choreographers on strategic, physical, and empathetic levels of the dance making process could go a long way to creating the conditions for dancers to transmit their authentic felt experience; allowing audiences to experience the vital source of the work through kinesthetic empathy.

2.4.1 Technique as Technology Distilling Meaning

Movement techniques are human constructs belonging to the commons, living languages whose function is to pass on lessons learned. They create opportunities to practice specific coordination patterns, shapes, and qualitative approaches, providing a springboard for innovation and expression. The techniques of modernist choreographers of the 20th century were often driven by the transmission of choreographer's movement signature, however many choreographers who train their company dancers today use scores that define parameters for improvisation, rather than strict movement syllabi dictating external form. Examples of work utilising improvisational systems include Ohad Naharin's Gaga technique for Batcheva Dance, Akram Khan's company training, Krystal Pite's Kidd Pivot company, Meg Stuarts' Damaged Goods, and Montreal's Compagnie Marie Chouinard, Isabelle Van Grimde's Corps Secret, Rubberband Dance, Parts & Labor, and Tentacle Tribe.

Even though contemporary dance has a history of challenging formal 'classical' vocabulary, it is less about rejecting codified movements themselves, and more to do with the way some techniques are tools used by hierarchical and elitist cultures that enforce control, conformity, and unrealistic beauty standards through the regimentation/instrumentation/mechanization of dancers' bodies. What is useful about defined movement patterns, is that they are building blocks for integrating more complex sequences, which in turn expand possibilities for complexity. I am not interested in approaching movement techniques as a means onto themselves, but we don't need to *'throw the baby out with the bathwater.'* Instead, codified vocabulary can be utilised as a shorthand for building more complex movement ideas to be merged and recombined collectively. Technique can be another tool for creation, as well as a barometer for noticing fluctuating states and sensations. "We are in movement throughout our lives, even when we are still, our minds are in motion." (Cools, 2017, p.14). Learning someone else's movements not only allows you to taste another's relationship to gravity and coordination, but it also allows you to feel how someone else experiences motion – which is at the essence of perceiving reality. So technical choreography can function like written text allowing you to perceive another's experience from the inside. Cools also references Daniel Sibony's discussion of what it is to be in between, Amin Matouf's investigation into multiple identities, as well as Stanley Keleman's take on myth and the body.

“Sibony is a dance aficionado as well as a philosopher and psychoanalyst. In his book *Le corps et sa danse* (1995), he uses his notion of the in-between to offer one of the most pertinent definitions of dance. He defines dance as a movement in-between two bodies: a *corps-mémoire* (body-memory) and a *corps-actuel* (body-present). The passageway from one to the other, which always takes place in both directions at the same time.” (Cools, 2017, p. 40)

Choreography can be a capsule of collective memory and codes that provides a channel for physical communication in the present with another, and between present, past, and future versions of oneself. Cultivating the quality of attention in the in-between space is key to the modulation I seek in this research with dancers, because I am interested in how practice can be used to generate dance that is always adapting to the present moment, creating live art that is truly alive.

Dance techniques are technologies passed on from the investigations of those that have come before, that allow us to make things in the present. They are also a map helping us to discover truths about our bodies, in places we might not have discovered on our own. They are words that we can borrow to invent new meanings and recombine already existing elements of vocabulary. They are rules we can follow or break. Choreography can be like writing a play. Technique combined with physical gesture and staging create the content for a work, like the script of a play reinterpreted with personal inflection. Movements are containers for meaning, existing on a certain level with somatic material creating subtext or communicating other aspects of experience (Andrade, 2015, pp.38-39). These notions are important for explaining the approach for mixing set choreography with improvisation in my work and for training both intentionally. Mixing gestural with abstracted language provides a wide spectrum of human movement to draw on, a common physical language for nonverbal communication with peers as we create, and with audiences in performance (Jackson, Derrida, 1999). The legacy of Postmodernism in Contemporary dance means that works commonly assemble different styles and approaches.

During the Judson Church era of the 1960's, views on technique training both expanded and broke down, prompting the exploration of other movement arts and a critical stance toward dance technique itself. A choreographic preference for the non-dancerly took artists from the 1960's to somatic practices as a method for identifying movement principles and eroding dancerly habits, in much the way the same earlier dance educators like Margaret H'Doubler searched for “natural” or normative movements.... Bricolage, on the other hand connotes the layering of disparate practices upon one another within the dancer-body, such as a classic Western form (ballet) with an ancient Eastern practice (yoga), reflecting postmodern ‘radical juxtaposition’ through a training agenda styled by the interests of the independent dancer. (Bales & Nettle-Fiol, 2008, pp. 2-3)

In the diverse creation landscape of the 21st century, a hybrid combination of technical and artistic influences is common, as opposed to one pure style. These remixes within the broad categories of classical, contemporary, Kathak, Hip Hop, African Dance, Martial arts training, among others, expose dancers to eclectic rhythmic sensibilities, variable relationships to weight, flow and sensorial awareness, with some room left for personal expression and filtering of the body's experience.

One of the changes I have experienced since beginning my dance career in the 90's is the contrast between modern/contemporary/new dance stylistically and qualitatively. The experience of dancing varied content is something I wish to explore and amplify within my choreographic work using combinations of gestural, theatrical, and abstracted movement. I am interested in reconfiguring the traces of pre-existing dance vocabulary from multiple techniques I have studied. As James Viveiros eloquently stated in another interview for Territoires Partagés³ "Anywhere you spend a long time, shapes you as an artist and I bring that history forward with me into what I do now... everything that we do in the past surfaces and comes through if we are open to it." (Flynn & Viveiros, 2020). Even beyond the amalgamation of technical sources, the inclusion of the real kinesthetic awareness and experience of dancers in both the creation and performance of Contemporary dance, moves it away from formalism and representation no matter where the language is sourced from. Training in technique is healthy form of contamination, expanding the range of human movement possibilities, and somatic research into sensation expands the range of textural and qualitative inflection. The two combined create fruitful recipes for authenticity, innovation, and modulation on many registers. Could there be recuperation in shifting gears as Laban suggests, if we practice moving in between these different modes?

2.4.2 Merging Codified Technique and Improvisation

Most codified dance techniques build skills from simple to complex combinations of movement vocabulary, but also functional movement patterns (engrams such as bending, lifting, turning, jumping, rolling, etc.). As Batson and Wilson note the philosophy behind different approaches to dance can at times be divided into different camps that prioritize either 'the savoir-faire or the savoir-dire'; as if technique with pre-existing steps were at odds with the experience and communication of content. This false binary

³ Interviews and commentary I recorded for the podcast of Territoires Partagés, to be published in an upcoming book, *Partager la danse*, edited by Johanna Bienaise and Manon Levac.

appears to be relatively recent, but as already noted, the importance of working with sensation alongside formal technique has emerged in every generation throughout the history of contemporary dance.

Learning the craft of dancing is so much more than performing pre-established movements in stylized ways, but there is richness in listening to the concepts contained in the capsules of techniques, while releasing stylised external forms. In avant-garde or alternative dance spaces, movements are often generated from compositional scores and perceptual games that generate qualitative internal shifts. The modulation explored in improvisation can be used to deconstruct, subvert and morph anything from pedestrian gestures, somatic states and written dance vocabulary. The combination of the technologies of codified technique and improvisation scores opens up a large gamut for invention and interpretation that I want to explore in practice and performance.

2.4.3 Creating a Syllabus for Choreography

What I am interested in conserving from the practices of modern dance choreographers such as Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham and José Limon, are the ways in which their pedagogy is linked to their choreography. Each took vocabulary derived from ballet and their predecessors and combined them with movements and concepts and their own. This is an oversimplification of their work, but in terms of their relationship to codified ballet technique, Martha Graham added articulations of the spine, floor work and wide stances with a different center of gravity and full-bodied breathing and expressiveness. Cunningham complexified the linear shapes of ballet technique, tilting the Cartesian axis, deconstructing the symmetry of limbs, and broke from following the dynamics in music by developing nonlinear relationships to musical scores. José Limon added the use of momentum, playing with gravity, using suspension and release inside of movements, and making the movement between forms important, rather than emphasizing arrival at shapes. The point being that in the language of each technique a choreographer distills and teaches specific ways of relating to time, space, physics, and flow.

All of this is important to my research for two major reasons. The first is that the choreographer takes the time to parse out what they are trying to do and communicate and teach it to others. The second is that the *transmitters* keep their somatic signature and engage their own intellectual, experiential, and mental talents and add to the evolution and transformation of ideas. This can improve and adapt techniques

to new eras, keeping them alive rather than odes to bygone eras. The danger, in my opinion, of classicism is that it takes a flexible and growing thing and makes it rigid, and frozen in time. This is not to say that essential ideas are thrown out, but permutation and iteration are a part of life. This is captured in Deleuze's notion of the *Iterative*, as well as Carrie Noland's theory around the movement innovation created by the subjective experiential. Why this is important in dance, and in general is that it undoes conditioned submission to authority and instead encourages individuals to engage and invest in ideas. Rather than placing the choreographer's work on a pedestal, *iterative* practice acknowledges dance making's reliance on the collaborative embodiment of dancers, and creates space for their experience within the work. The increased capacity for modulation does add complexity to dancers' tasks, which makes training improvisation, somatic and set material separately and together important. Combining codified dance with somatic and improvisational research also requires time to practice shifting between different modes of perceptions, physical and cognitive effort. (Girard and Fortin, 2005). This type of alternance between different modalities has its own recuperative benefits according to Laban (Loureiro 2013). It informs the methodology of periodized hybrid praxis being used in the research and creation of *Iterations*. Begging the question, what rehearsal activities can prepare and help dancers to accomplish these multiple tasks? The underlying idea that I am testing is that training for hybridity of performance and receptivity can potentially create both cross-training and recuperation, in turn contributing to the sustainability of dancers' work.

Conceptually, I am interested in moving away from judging which approach to dance is better, and instead gaining the insights and wisdom inherent in diverse forms of training, to create more nuanced and fully realized ideas. However, this work should not be all pawned off on the dancers. Choreographers initial research and work parsing out ideas to facilitate their vision is also key. At present, we either have choreographers being credited for work done by dancers that train and improvise it themselves, or dancers that are micromanaged and pushed to conform and submit in often harmful ways. This research looks at ways artists could engage around common goals with both agency and direction. Using periodized physical and artistic preparation to define a territory, and communication and video to problem solve. I situate my work in the post-modern lineage of Bricolage. In providing a preparatory training I want to address the range from somatic, meditative work, to more formalised vocabulary as well as perceptual improvisation-based research. We all have different histories, and I want to make space for different aspects of our human and dance experiences inside of the preparation, while sharing the knowledge and sensibility accumulated throughout my career.

This builds on the sociological ideas of Mauss and Noland, that gestures and technique de soi are learnt socially, but reformatted and evolved through individual interoceptive experience. I am not suggesting that we take away directorial decision making, but acknowledge the skill, sensitivity and demanding labor that go into training for and incarnating movement art, that is currently done by dancers. I am proposing research where everyone involved engages to a degree in physical exploration through shared training and also has the opportunity to gain perspective on the work from watching video throughout the process. Distributing the visual and sensorial labour between dancers and choreographer can potentially address many of the inequities and challenges described in the previous chapter. Dance is a microcosm for forms of knowledge and hierarchies that exist in the world. Intentionally undoing the dominance of the choreographer's critical eye/opinion and currency as auteur, and instead creating space to address the sensorial experience and physical challenges inside the work, can potentially go a long way to creating a more egalitarian and functional workplace.

2.5 Hybridity - What do we mean by technique in Contemporary Dance today?

I count myself among many dance makers whose work integrates different influences and explores ideas via a full spectrum of movement techniques. Range, craft, and content are equally important interconnected aspects of dance that are subject to dancer's interpretation. I recognize that moving between multiple possibilities requires skills to develop and combine these different approaches. In her Masters' thesis, Johanna Bienaise noted differing modes of interpretation in my work; that dancers were asked to play between structured improvisation driven by tasks and imagery, as well as set choreography open to interpretation. I ask dancers to work within the four different roles identified by Fortin and Newell's (2008) grid for performers, which are: executor, interpreter, participant and improviser in the dances that I co-create with them. This research creation seeks to support the differentiated roles named above, as well as the cognitive skills necessary for integrating and moving between them. I am looking to articulate, nurture and transition between these varied influences that coexist within my movement practice.

To be embodied is to participate in a migration from one body form to another. Each of us is a nomad, a wave that has duration for a time and then takes on a new somatic shape. This perpetual transformation is the subject of all myth. (Cools 2015, 14 Abram, David, 1996)

In the book *In-between Dance Cultures*, Guy Cools explores the multiple influences of choreographers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan. Having worked with both artists as a dramaturg, he explores questions around culture and belonging, raised by their multiple cultural identities both in their individual artistic

practices, as well as citizens of the world. The evolution of individuals, artistic styles and art forms involves travel across permeable borders, quoting Salmon Rushdie's "Freedom to move across frontiers." (Cools, Rushdie). He investigates stylistic frontiers and discusses how techniques can play a role in configuring our aesthetic lens, as they are composed not only of choreographed movements, but also contain values and ways of thinking that can inform fluctuating choice making in our bodies, a perspective also examined by Berthoz, Andrade and Noland.

L'habilités du corps d'actualiser les nuages informationnels qui le cerclent et donc dévoiler ses potentialités et cohabiter avec l'espace. La chair, morceau de monde que nous sommes, est un registre inconstant – puisqu'en flux, de la partie du monde où l'on est de celles où l'on a été. Singulier et concomitamment, nous inscrivons le monde en nous et écrivons du monde en nous, nous corpographons. (Andrede, 2015, p. 43)

Cools traces phenomena occurring within the context of contemporary dance creation, as well as broader societal implications. "The contemporary dancer's somatic awareness and knowledge of the body is a starting point." (Cools 2017, 14). Giving rise to an exploration of the state of *receptivity* as a quality of awareness cultivated by somatic practices, that is also a philosophical and ecological perspective that could offset current dominant patterns of idealizing action without considering repercussions.

2.5.1 Hybridity of the Somatic and Codified

In Victoria Dejacó interview with renegade choreographer Florentina Holzinger about her creation process, Holzinger shares how she collaborates with her dancers, as well as her observations and reactions to norms within the European contemporary dance milieu in 2018. Having attended the school for New Dance Development, where the training opposes the dualism of mind and body in favor of somatic techniques, Holzinger shares her thoughts on mixing of somatic and codified language in her training, practice, and work are pertinent to my work. What resonates for me in what she has to say is the possibility to free up the mind when performing more formalized work, as a release from the vigilant awareness can lead to heightened voluntary control of the conscious mind. Her experiences turn the somatic/technical conversation on its head, citing the influence of embodied techniques, alongside the usefulness of utilizing '*an instrumentation of the body*' to turn off the control of the conscious mind. Allowing choreography to become integrated into long term memory can free up perception. She also points out like Bienaise in 2011 that somatic work can be a nebulous method to work with as it can be challenging to define and subject to the whims of the observer.

My school, the School for New Dance Development in Amsterdam, had a reputation for being very 'New-Age', meaning that they introduced a lot of concepts contrary to the Western dualism of body and mind that we see, for example, in ballet. In classic ballet technique, the dancer's body and movements are strictly standardized and the body has to conform to a certain ideal shape. The dancer has no alternative for their own conception of the dance; they fail when they cannot fulfill the form. My education was contrary to that. It was much more about observing the body in a state of 'becoming' – in a unity of body and mind. There was a huge emphasis on the concept of 'presence'. All of that was pretty mystical and exciting, but I was also often frustrated by the huge mystery of embodiment that would give subjective value to the dance. This led me to seek refuge in more 'measurable' physical practices that were not about creating unity, but rather allowing the body to not think for a second, to treat the body as an instrument, an object that one can control and play. Nowadays my work and work ethics are hugely influenced by both concepts. (Dejaco, 2018).

2.5.2 Abstraction, Intertextuality and Authenticity

The use of *Somatics* is important, but as already stated, I also align with choreographers that play with the technologies inside of codified techniques. The *Intertextuality* (Jennifer Jackson, 1999) of conceptual ideas from post-modern philosophy, theatre, visual and performance art have created hybrid forms that draw away from the visually dominant classical aesthetic of beauty, towards immersive experiences that challenge perception or act on kinesthetic empathy. In her article, William Forsythe's Challenge to the Balletic Text, Jennifer Jackson, examines ballet as a language analogous to Latin, an artefact generated in the past, appropriated and rendered contemporary by post structuralist methods. Building on the parallels that Derrida made between dance making and writing, she articulates how Forsythe reconfigures balletic language in new ways that strip it of the lyricism and ornate sense preserved from court gestures. (Jackson, 1999, pp.106).

Forsythe 'styles himself as a designer and architect, who merely puts diverse materials and building bricks together' (Gradinger 1993:515). His interest in current cultural philosophical writing, especially the works of Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, Baudrillard and Barthes, is manifested in his experiments with dance and theatrical form. Reference to the influence of his study of Laban's space harmony theories on his choreography also emerges in the literature. (Jackson, 1999, p. 107).

An example of disassociating the historical traditions and culture of ballet from the movement technology contained within its technique and vocabulary language, is that dancers performing Forsythe's work do not hide their efforts or mask the experience of dancing.

2.6 Systemic Approach to the Creation Process

2.6.1 Ecosystems of Interdependence

Call for a new ecology from where we are now and artists as diplomats, call for artists to play a role in the change of perspective necessary to avoid ecological disaster. (Stalpaert & Bytsebier, 2014, p. 71)

This research is informed by philosophical perspectives that conceive of reality as composed of webs of interdependent systems that impact the material world and less visible realms. Looking at lived experience and techniques of the body from Phenomenological, Heuristic and Pragmatic philosophy from western sources, as well as insights from Buddhist, Hindu, Pagan and Indigenous traditions. This conceptual framework is also informed by sociological, political, ethical and artistic analysis of current contexts of labor, collaboration and resource use from artists, cultural critics, and academics whose writings are rooted in Intersectional, Marxist, Feminist, Social and Climate justice thought and activism. The methods used in the research creation *Iterations*, are drawn from Contemporary dance research and Dance Science, as well the disciplines of Physical Theatre (Devising, Dramaturgy), Sport Training (Cross-training, Periodization, Tapering), Somatics (diverse sources), Cognition, Neuroscience and Neurophysiology.

Art making and research actions are by nature heuristic and my work relies on parsing out and utilizing the accumulation of learning taking place within a creation process. *Something falls into the category of pragmatism, only if the observations and inductions are carried over to the final iteration/product/version* (Scheler p. 7, p. 21). Pragmatism favors intentional actions that aim to transform society for the better and its application in ecological, feminist, and social justice spheres influence my desire to apply ethical actions in the arena of dance creation. Dance is very much about causal interactions between visible and invisible processes and my research involves recognizing the inherent value and biological processes occurring within individuals engaged in a collaborative process. Taking an ecological view of nature as interconnected living systems (also supported by physics, and systems theory), I am exploring how to work with the creation process as an ecosystem (Jeffries), where there is energy input as well as output, and where the production does not outweigh the equally important phases of gestation, generation, rest and fallow periods (Smart 2014, Halprin 1969, Mollison 2013).

Materialism as espoused by William James and John Dewey privileges somatic awareness and the intertwined active and receptive aspects of movement. Pragmatism, like phenomenology, rejects a dualistic framework and values 'Primacy of the intersubjective, pragmatisms are self-reflective'. (Colopeitro pp. 6). My project creates an ecosystem of interdependent processes and connections where the hybrid training and movement research are the intentional actions taken to support the making of a piece and the development of those embodying the work. As Keller and Golley appropriately put it in their introduction to *The Philosophy of Ecology*, the ecological worldview similarly 'emphasizes interaction and connectedness' [...] Ecology initially hoped mainly to fathom the patterns of the relation between man and his – often tarnished – natural environment. (Stalpaert and Bytтеbier 2014, 62). **Ecozoic** refers to an experience as a part of nature and is as much a state of mind as it is a state of body. The threat to this ecological state has been felt by peoples around the globe throughout history whenever colonialism and industrialism start to take hold. The objective reasoning of empiricism sets humans apart from their '*kinesthetic empathy*' (Reynolds & Reason 2014) and connection with the world, and lays the way for instrumentation of the body, alienation of the self and extraction from the environment.

Much like the contemporary environmental movement in the wake of Climate Change, the 18th century group the *Romantics*, such as philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau were horrified by the destruction brought on by industrialisation. Reveling in nostalgia for an idealized state of nature and seeking to uncover its underlying patterns through long walks alone and rendering realistic and expressionistic paintings. Their reverential, but detached view of the natural world epitomises a European point of view post *Enlightenment*. Later in century, the German biologist, Ernst Haeckel launched the term Ecology in 1866 in relation to rational ideas put forward by Linnaeus, Lamarck and Darwin, "at a time when the ideals of the Enlightenment are superseded by deterministic positivist thinking and the relation between man and his environment is at the core of attention." (Stalpaert and Bytтеbier 2014, 60-61). The functioning paradigm is still one of 'man' as being separate from nature, whereas most other global cultural perspectives conceive of humans existing within interconnected and interdependent systems within nature.

The (neo) Romanticism with its revaluation of the spontaneously natural that eludes the grasp of reflective reason. The Romantics experienced the advancing industrialization and urbanization at the time and the technological progress and devaluation of artisanal creation following in their wake as an existential flaw. Their view of the consequences of industrialization was a gloomy one. The values of civilization, which in the age of Enlightenment were long believed to hold absolute truths, turned out to be lies. Countering sterile cognitive thought, the (neo) romantics acknowledged the dominance and sometimes devastating power of nature, as well as its healing potential. (Stalpaert & Bytтеbier, 2014, pp. 62-63).

One of the main features of post-industrial, western society seems to be an inattention to our basic physical sensations. Our work, travel and leisure often involve numbing the body with drugs and alcohol, distracting our brains with entertainment. In work or sport, we are trained to instrumentalize our bodies through physical conditioning, and develop *functional effacement* where we go numb, ignoring automatic body schema in the pursuit of a mental or physical intentional goal (Gallagher 1995). There is rarely the space for listening to, let alone responding to physical sensation. Through dominant systems of power, we are conditioned to internalize social controls from an early age, regimenting daily habits (Foucault 1980), taught to ignore our desires to move our bodies and to sit still. This causes a lack of skill in listening to and awakening the nervous system. The only reason it is a skill to listen to our bodies is because we have lost our innate capacities. Feeling requires no expertise or specialization beyond the time to move and the space to react and adapt. In fact, sensing the world through our bodies is an adaptive survival mechanism we are losing. The lack of empathy, slow reactivity to the impact of actions, and disconnection from the physical world puts us in a place where we can ignore the tragedy of what we are doing to life on the planet, including ourselves.

The way back from the acceleration of capitalism and the precipice of the climate crisis on a large scale, and abuses of power on a community level can be to relearn how to feel empathy for each other, and to regulate our nervous systems in order to react intelligently. Despite the persistent myth of rationality, we live within societies engineered to manipulate our instincts and keep us consuming. Since cultures are socially constructed but individually experienced, practicing Mindbody acts of *Cognition* can potentially give people the skills to negotiate their agency in daily life. A *somatic* approach brings experience into focus, creating the possibility for both pattern recognition and repatterning. The operation of a dance rehearsal is a microcosm of a larger phenomenon where the energies of many people are rallied around the creation of a project, but the impact of the work on those generating it is rarely considered. The pursuit of the goal takes precedence over the well-being of those realizing it. In terms of arts practice, Guy Cools criticizes the ethical and artistic choices derived from art market pressures.

- 1) Repeating known patterns of success
- 2) Tolerating poor behavior

2.6.2 Undervaluing Collaborators

How much do I respect and acknowledge the impact of my work on my artistic collaborators?
How much do I respect and acknowledge the 'bodies' of my performers? (Cools, 2005, p.94)

Ecology is a scientific view that concedes an interdependent relationships between organisms and their environment. The concept of periodization also begins from a holistic view of individuals or teams, aligning them with their goals, through plans that affords space and time within a training process for preparation, nourishing, integration and recuperation/recovery. Artistic periodization sees the creation process as an ecosystem being stewarded to nurture dance artists throughout the process of generating experiences for them and audiences, by considering input, output and the alchemy of bringing organisms together. Like sustainable agriculture models, (Mollison 2013) this type of system is cyclical with planting, growth, production and fallow periods. Periodization gradually builds up capacities, by factoring in the impact of exertion and stress, to avoid draining people or pushing them towards the edge of collapse. Instead, it aims to generate a surplus of capacities that the athlete or dancer desire to release. In this way, artistic periodization of a new creation can be a nourishing process for performers, rather than a depleting one.

It is one of the qualities of the artist's creative process that through its autonomy and singularity, it is still able to reconnect and to bridge different fields of human knowledge and by doing so revitalize them. In order to do so, the artist has to develop a personal, situational ethics that dialogues, in a critical (and not cynical) way with the present state of affairs, also of his own field (like for instance for the arts market) and presents a concrete utopian (in the Blochian sense) alternative. *Art and Ecology – Scenes from a Tumultuous Affair* (Stalpaert & Byttebier, 2014)

Where do I position myself as an artist within larger economic, political and social debate?

Since both the production and distribution of art are part of an economic system, how much am I willing to exploit or compromise inside the system?

We are missing or rushing through parts of the processes because of scarce resources, but these short cuts are damaging to the art we want to make and to the people making it. They create destructive hierarchies and physical and psychological injuries. Tension and frustration are normal parts of any process, but acknowledging these vulnerabilities and supporting them, rather than avoiding, ignoring, denying and misusing them is what interests me. Environmental/Ecozoic/Ethical/Ecological habits have a place in dance making and underly the motivation of this project.

2.6.3 Affordances

Affordances: The *affordances* of the environment are what it *offers* the animal, what it *provides* or *furnishes*, either for good or ill. The verb to *afford* is found in the dictionary, but the noun *affordance* is not. I have made it up. I mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment. (J. J. Gibson 1979, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*)

Affordances are the objects within an environment that an animal uses as resources to survive and thrive. Coined by J.J. Gibson's, the concept considers complex webs of interdependent systems within an environment. This research applies this holistic paradigm, viewing the rehearsal process as an ecosystem and the activities and resources within it as affordances. Gibson's affordances align with the way that Lawrence Halprin suggested listing the resources available at the beginning of a process, in his RSVP Cycles template for creative collaboration and design.

- Resources (the knowledge, abilities and motivations of the participants and the material resources needed to execute the score)
- Score (a plan leading to action)
- Valuation (the reflective and communication processes that deepen participants meaning making and facilitate the score's ongoing development and evolution)
- Performance (the action itself). (Halprin 1969)

What resources does a rehearsal process offer dance artists? The environment of the studio, the space to move, learn and experiment, the feedback and support of others and the opportunity to eventually be seen in performances. Given the demands and expectations of dancers, what resources can help them grow their skills and cultivate the energy required to fulfill their role in the work? The following reveals many of the potential benefits of periodization as a dancers' resource:

Maintaining dancer wellness within any environment, specifically the collegiate dance environment, is a complex task that involves a multifactorial approach. Curriculum modifications within any dance program require deep collaboration, transparency, and consistent communication among faculty, students, and administrators alike. Program evaluation with subsequent periodization implementation is one of many important strategies that warrant consideration. Injury prevention education (Russell 2013; Stracciolini et al. 2016), screening programs (Bronner, Ojofeitimi, and Mayers 2006; Gamboa et al. 2008; Wilson

and Deckert 2009), and dance triage centers (Fulton et al. 2014) are often accessible tools for smaller or less funded dance institutions. Moving focus to preventative care and education complemented with periodization could lead to stronger and healthier dancers within all dance communities. (DiPasquale, 2018, p. 162).

Emily Jeffries described the creation process she experienced with choreographer Maresa von Stockert as an exploration using resources created by working practices, kinaesthetic empathy and shared histories for generating von Stockert's choreographic work. "My understanding of her instructions and methods of defining scores used in rehearsal was conveyed through kinesthetic empathy. In addition to this conveyance, the work of my peers affected me. As a group, we developed a rehearsal environment." (Jeffries 2014, p.8). In dance creation this would involve acknowledging the unique contributions of dancers' skill, energy and creativity used in the process as resources to be nurtured, rather than deliverables by an expendable worker. Through this lens a periodized process for physiological and psychological needs resonates with Marx's concept of labor as *Praxis* and the communication and facilitation elements in my research parallel Halprin's notion of a *Valuaction*.

2.6.4 Resource Extraction

Resource extraction raises both ethical and physiological concerns for the ways in which dance making is practiced. I will be looking at ways existing artistic reflection and programming participate in and critique it. Ecology, interdependence and sustainable development are antithetical to the dominant paradigm that overlooks the intrinsic value of living things, and profits from underpaid and unacknowledged contributions of workers. This same system overly values the myth of individual genius artists whose mistreatment of others is justified in the making of their work in the contemporary arts market. Bringing ethics and sustainability into the arts means we have to look at the impact of the current status quo and adapt to add resiliency and fairness to the systems we use to create inside. "I feel more and more that the arts community should not only be critical about political, economic and macro structures, but should also be self-critical about how it organizes its own community and market." (Cools, 2014, 47)

Capitalist modes of production disregard rather than nurture the underlying processes that generate the essential raw resources, while valuing their extraction, refinement, and subsequent market value. Art and dance industries often emulate these patterns by exploiting, objectifying, and undervaluing physical work by rendering aspects of it invisible and treating the people performing it as disposable, while financially rewarding the conceptual work that brings a product to market. Dancers' exertion parallels both the physical and mental labor of other contract workers in today's post industrialist society.

Creative knowledge workers - especially if they are freelancers - always rely on their environment to acquire new projects...Was the latest job I did for them perhaps not as good as I thought? And, worst of all, have they found someone better than me? The project worker is in a permanent state of doubt, A delay in answer could be a sign that the next assignment is not forthcoming. Within this context they are always depending on others and on what they think others think of them. Such circumstances in turn are the ultimate breeding ground for a pathology that had all but vanished from the medical dictionary, i.e. hysteria. According to Slavoj Žižek, hysteria is defined by the question: What kind of object am I in the eyes of the Other? It is a question that confronts post-Fordist workers with their permanent state of being potentially interchangeable. All of a sudden, the creativity or knowledge they have to offer turns out to be not all that unique or authentic. Replaceability confronts creative people with their own potential futility or insignificance... While we systematically allow fossil fuels, plants, and animal species to disappear, laboring under the delusion that they are somehow replaceable, we humans somehow all share a fear that tomorrow we will be replaced by someone else. (Gielan, 2014, p. 28-30)

The gig economy of the art and dance industries emulates both the capitalist model of resource extraction as well as its reliance on the invisible and undervalued labor of people performing manual tasks. In intersectional feminist critiques of capitalism, patriarchy and white privilege, much of the self-sustaining labor in our society is not properly recognized or remunerated (Hooks 1984, Lorde 2007). Put simply, physicality is undervalued by capitalism. Dancers' embodied role in dance creation exemplifies this statement, as the cognitive Mindbody labor of dancers are rarely fully considered, effectively included in the planning or credited, leaving their work and its impact on them invisible. Even though professional dancers are highly trained and dedicated artists bringing refined assets to collaborative work, they are often treated like they are sources to be extracted from and replaced when they are too injured to continue (Fortin 2009). As mentioned earlier, the milieu also relies on the unpaid administrative and production work of independent choreographers creating content (Fortin, 2009). It is not the aim of this paper to paint a picture of the economic distribution of scarce resources within the contemporary dance domain, but just to make the point that elements such as: budgetary concerns, technical costs, touring schedule, studio rental and collaborator fees are considered, while dancers energy expenditure and needs for preparation, nutrition, facilitation, recuperation, constructive feedback and cross training, are overlooked, in the context of independent dance creations. I am acutely aware of the creative and financial pressures that realizing a choreographic work entails, but it does not negate the responsibility for factoring in and planning for the impact my work places on dancers.

Dancers' exertion parallels both the physical and mental labor of other contract workers in today's post industrialist society. We see a pattern of resource extraction at an unsustainable rate that fails to acknowledge

or nurture the fundamental resources feeding the means of production. Periodization is a holistic concept I'm borrowing from sport as a means of feeding resources back into rehearsals in order to facilitate dancers achieving performance goals progressively throughout the process.

2.7 Periodization

Fischer and Csapo propose to define periodization as follows:

Periodization is a generally accepted approach to manage athletic performance by sub-division of training programs into sequential, specifically focused training periods. Periodization implements structured variability into the training process, with the aim of maximizing performance in the most critical phases of the competitive season and/or improving long-term development." (Fisher, J.P. & Csapo, R., 2021, p. 9).

Periodization is a progressive training program aligned with achieving a specific goal. It is built around the body's capacity to adapt to a certain amount of stress from a stimulus known as the *General Adaptation Syndrome* (GAS) identified by Hans Selye. Selye coined the term for healthy or beneficial stress as "Eustress" (healthy). The training principle in Periodization is designed to avoid "Distress" or exhaustion, where tissues are damaged through over overtraining. Instead, periodization is divided into progressive cycles of activity designed to cultivate desirable capacities, alternated with periods of rest and regeneration. Built around the body's capacity to adapt to stress, they call it resistance, one could call it resilience. Utilizing the adaptive mechanism and reducing stress before its resilient capacity is breached and it moves over into exhaustion and diminished capacities. Much of the literature on periodization focuses on physiology, but an interesting study by Vealey used the technique to focus on athletes' confidence and psychological state. My research incorporates both mental and biological resilience, because the two are interconnected and both contribute to performance and long-term sustainability.

Periodization is one way for the clinician to approach the design of resistance training programs. Periodization is the planned manipulation of training variables (load, sets, and repetitions) to maximize training adaptations and prevent the onset of overtraining syndrome...The goal of a periodized program is to optimize the principle of overload, the process by which the neuromuscular systems adapt to unaccustomed load or stressors. The training program specifies the intensity, volume, and frequency; the interactions of these variables result in the overload...Conceptually, periodization helps avoid this problem because the load on the neuromuscular system is constantly changing. Furthermore, periodization may be beneficial by adding variation to workouts, thus avoiding boredom or training plateaus. (Lorenz, D., Reiman, M., & Walker, J., 2010, p. 211).

Lorenz and al. have identified several stages of muscular reaction to training:

- a) alarm stage – shock of stimulus,
- b) resistance stage – adaptation to the stimulus by the system,
- c) exhaustion – repairs inadequate and decrease in system function

(Lorenz, D., Reiman, M., & Walker, J., 2010)

The cycles divided into a year-round conditioning program of off-season, preseason, in season, and postseason, are incremental and designed to avoid overtraining while increasing the multiple components of fitness, such as strength, speed and endurance. Periodization was initially developed by the Soviet physicians L. Matveev, N. Ozolin and supplemented by V. Verkhoshansky, an organised, holistic approach where the “education, upbringing, teaching and the growth of the athlete’s functional potential...is developed on a pscho-physiological basis that includes physiological, psychological, biomechanical and skill elements.” (Wyon 2010, 67). Matveev proposed a program geared towards peaking just prior to competition that focuses on skill, biomotor abilities and psychological traits. Verkhoshansky observed the adaptations of athletes’ metabolites: creatine kinase, blood lactate, serum testosterone concentration and cortisol, as indicators of how they were reacting to increased training loads. For both, *overcompensation is a key factor in both Marveey and Verkhoshansky’s theories – when a new stress is introduced the body adapts and when the stress is removed the body regenerates* (Wyon 2010). Training increases in frequency and load in relationship to the individual rate of adaptation, if this rate is not respected, overtraining occurs, symptoms of which are decreased performance and susceptibility to injury. The method was further developed by Romanian sport scientist Tudor Bompa in the 1950’s. Eventually it became more individualized based on personal physiological data. Traditionally periodization is organized in different cycles and phases, eventually becoming more individualized based on personal physiological data. My project is broken down into a preparatory phase, followed by two mesocycles of 3 active week and including one rest week in the middle of the process and one performance week at the end. The training program is supposed to be simple and easily adapted to fit in with the athlete’s progress, through Preparatory – Competitive – Transition Phases. The concept of Tapering is also included pre-event, where a ‘Peaking’ of energy is created by generating a surplus of capacities that exceed what is required for the event, duration of high intensity training is reduced or scaled back just prior to competition to generate a surplus of energy that can facilitate the athlete’s performance.

Taper, or reduced-volume training, improves competition performance across a broad spectrum of exercise modes and populations...Tapering can best be summarized by the adage “less is more” because maintained intensity and reduced volume prior to competition yields significant performance benefits. (Murach, K . & Bagley, J., 2015).

Periodization has been critiqued for being reductionist (Kiele) and which has led to its application in more flexible and individualized ways as the concept has evolved. A more adaptive model created by Poloquin, that he called *Undulating* and is more commonly known as *Nonlinear*, includes variability of activity and aligns more readily with existing dance methods.

Nonlinear periodization is based on the concept that volume and load are altered more frequently (daily, weekly, biweekly) to allow the neuromuscular system more frequent periods of recovery. Phases are much shorter, providing more frequent changes in stimuli, which may be highly conducive to strength gains. Kraemer and Fleck expanded this concept by including planned versus flexible nonlinear periodization. The planned model follows predicted loading schemes, but the flexible plan allows the clinician to adjust the plan based on the status of the athlete... Periodization can be accomplished by manipulating sets, repetitions, exercise order, number of exercises, resistance, rest periods, type of contractions, and training frequency thereby providing numerous periodization programs. Manipulating variables is arguably the greatest challenge that clinicians face when designing and modifying resistance training programs. (Lorenz, D., Reiman, M., & Walker, J., 2010, p. 211).

Strategic organization can be broken down in the following way:

Active & Recuperative Phases	Activities & Goals
Macrocycle = One year	
Phase 1: Mesocycle = 1-3 months	Preseason Preparation: Regain strength and stamina
Phase 2: Mesocycle = 2- 6 weeks	Training: Progressively increasing volume/load of exercises
Phase 3: Mesocycle = 2- 6 weeks	Training for Performance: Low training volume, high training load, develop factors necessary for goals
Phase 4: Micro cycle = one week	Competition/Performance: Preparing for competition conditions, decrease intensity of load, increase tactical training
Phase 5: Mesocycle = 2- 6 weeks	Off Season: Transition to rest & biological regeneration

Table 2.1 Periodization of the Creative Process

2.7.1 Periodization in Dance

Matthew Wyon is a professor of Sports Medicine at the School of Sport, Performing Arts and Leisure at the University of Wolverhampton, as well as the Jerwood Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries, and the Laban Center in London, UK. His article, "Preparing to Perform, Periodization and Dance", which appeared in the *Journal of Dance Medicine and Science* in 2010, gives a background of historical and recent research in periodization before offering hypothetical models that have been partially applied in dance schools and by professional companies. Referencing the higher rate of injury reported by professional dancers than in the most "strenuous of contact sports." Wyon proposes models of periodization "to prevent overtraining and its links to injury, while improving the dancer's readiness to perform optimally." (Wyon 2010, 67). The main advances in sports training he proposes applying to dance are the adoption of training that addresses all physiological capacities and the incorporation of rest and recuperation within yearly, monthly and weekly schedules.

In making the case that there is room to improve the training methods in dance, Wyon references 25 studies (#31-48 in his bibliography) looking at cardiovascular and overall physiological capacities of high-level dance students and professionals from 1982 – 1996, that reveal the startling fact that their aerobic and anaerobic fitness levels are similar to that of sedentary populations of the same age. Wyon points out that injuries often occur during performance periods because dancers' cardiovascular capacities aren't prepared for the aerobic demands of full-length performances. He cites dancers' testimonials that trace their fatigue back to the demanding hours of rehearsal and types of choreography they are asked to rehearse in the pursuit of aesthetic goals and resulting in *staleness, burn out and injury* (Morgan 1987). Wyon states that over the past 20 years with the application of periodization and tapering in sport, coaches have found *quality over quantity* to yield results, and that these advantages could be easily transferred to dance, with potentially the same benefits to dancers. In other studies, Wyon and Carr observed *a 50% decrease in reported mood disturbance upon introducing a tapering technique 1 week prior to performance*, with dancers reporting feeling more energized and better able to perform.

Wyon's perspective in no way devalues dance, stating that *the majority of dancers are highly skilled artistic athletes* (Wyon 2010, 67). He does however make the case that the physiological reality of the body's needs doesn't disappear just because artistic concerns are present. Wyon suggests artistic perfection has no limiting factors, while human capacities do. Dancing training, he notes, gives a lot of attention to skill development, flexibility and coordination, possibly to the detriment of the other key physical possibly to

the detriment of the other key physical attributes such as endurance, power, and aerobic and anaerobic capacities. Secondary to skill, but vital to create greater physical and mental reserves, so that energy can be focused on performance are the components found in Verkhoshansky's model of periodization that include training for: aerobic, anaerobic, flexibility, strength and power parameters. From a previous article, Carr and Wyon point to the necessity for *teachers or choreographers to recognise when quality of movement starts to deteriorate* and create rest periods and overcome the professions tendency towards overtraining which leads to burn out (Wyon 2010, p.70). Coordination and concentration decrease rapidly after 30 minutes, making long uninterrupted rehearsals counterproductive.

Nicole Becker (2016) proposed a dance-specific periodization program incorporating a preseason of lower intensity training, in-season of high-intensity training, performance season of lowered or tapered-intensity training, postseason of cross- training education, and off-season of rest and recovery. Most notably in this periodization definition is the recommended inverse relationship between department events (e.g. performances) and dance training intensity. For example, when a dancer is in a tech or performance week, the training load in his or her courses should decrease. Furthermore, Matthew Wyon (2010) suggested a tapering program leading up to performance, which might also help to reduce the risk of overtraining and emphasize the importance of "rest as vital training component" (Wyon 2010, 70). (DiPasquale, 2018, p. 162).

The final key element to implementation of these ideas is communication between rehearsal directors, choreographers and teachers in order to coordinate a balance between work and rest in terms of the energy output asked of a dancer through the day and week. Not only is it important to create achievable goals, but also the mindset that allows someone to believe that they are capable, even if with inevitable setbacks that are a part of any learning process.

Developmental confidence is enhanced by having confidence in one's abilities from a growth mindset perspective, and particularly that performance is the result of acquirable skills. However, this doesn't happen automatically. Developmental confidence means that athletes believe that they can sustain the effort required to convert their potential into proficient performance. This is often viewed more simply as motivation, but athletes often describe it as a lack of belief in their ability to work hard enough to do it. They just don't believe it is possible or that they can do it. In this sense, it is a lack of developmental confidence. Along with being confident about acquiring skills, developmental confidence also involves being confident about withstanding failure. The ability to cope adaptively with failure is an important aspect of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). (Vealey, 2019, p. 34).

2.7.2 Coordination of Expectations and Performance

Athletes often set expectations on how they will perform in competition. These expectations could be based on their past results, competition factors, self-condition, environment and, in many cases, what they hear from other people, coaches or the media. Research has consistently shown that expectations often cause anxiety, especially when the athlete feels that his or her skills do not match up with the expected results. This can lead to an increase in pre-competition and competition anxiety, often causing poor performance, and over time may even cause burnout. Many coaches and parents are unknowingly at fault when it comes to producing anxiety amongst athletes. Success fear syndrome and failure fear syndrome are some examples of anxiety status becoming psychological disturbance.

2.8 The Challenges of Creating

This section will examine the hurdles inherent in creating a new choreographic work, seeking to understand how the obstacles faced by choreographers and interpreters overlap, differ and affect each other. I will begin by considering how practical, creative and social pressures impact choreographers' actions, which then in turn shape the reality for dancers generating devised work or performing set choreography.

2.8.1 The Creative Source

Pour avoir vu la vie dans le vivant ou le vivant dans le vécu, le romancier ou le peintre reviennent les yeux rouges, le souffle court. Ce sont des athlètes: pas des athlètes qui auraient bien formé leur corps et cultivé le vécu... Un athlétisme qui n'est pas organique ou musculaire, mais un athlétisme du devenir qui révèle seulement les forces qui ne sont pas les siennes 'spectre plastique'. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991, p.161).

As Deleuze and Guattari's text evokes, artists can plunge in the depths of the unified field and resurface with ideas, sensations and intuitions that serve as tools for enunciating their experience and bringing others into an unknown territory. In the case of dance, there is the potential of developing an athletic artistry in a physiological and psychological sense, as well as the possibility of accessing this space by training and cultivating *the sentient body as an interface for experience and communication*. (Cools, 2014, p. 50). Developing the capability to follow our attention across the multiple layers of visceral experience is the territory being explored by postmodern contemporary choreographers, practitioners and philosophers. The point is often made, that the revelation of art is beyond conscious control. That the work

is in fact the result of an ongoing dialogue between the ephemeral complexity of our unconscious, our sensorial experience and the reflective observations of our composing consciousness.

L'artiste arrivé à maturité garde assez de souplesse dans ses interventions – par ses intentions – par sa capacité à circuler librement à travers les nombreux niveaux différenciés et dédifférenciés de la conscience – pour pouvoir se débrouiller avec son médium sans exercer sur lui un plein contrôle conscient ... 'Accident' est un terme relatif. (Ehrenzweig, 1982, p. 93)

The challenge then, is to create structures and ways of working that encourage the feedback loop between the unconscious and conscious, where the work of art acts as a medium between these two facets, while taking on a life of its own. "*La spécificité du travail du chorégraphe lui-même sera de projeter cette 'cristallisation', non de l'objectiver, mais de la trans subjectiver.*" (Louppe 1997, 251). In the case of dance, the work is to generate the practical recipe for incarnating states of being with oneself and others, that follow a road map of events in time and space. In the article, *The Art of Listening*, dramaturge Guy Cools' suggests that artists are called on to translate personal sensed experiences into conscious works of art, that can then be experienced by others, "to find a personal, authentic articulation of something unknown, intuitively sensed outside of us, seems to be the real challenge, the goal of any truly creative process." Quoting Elaine Scarry's affirmation from *On Beauty* that "beautiful things have 'a forward momentum' and 'incite the desire to bring new things into the world.'" (Cools, 2014, p. 46). Art, and specifically dance, allow us to explore potential realities: to develop other abilities, to react in new ways, to stretch out time, to revisit memories and to amplify our sensorial experiences.

Le travail sensoriel multiple du danseur porte en lui-même une fiction originaire qu'il pourrait très bien se contenter d'exploiter sans aller chercher à hue et à dia telle ou telle inspiration: il suffit qu'il travaille fondamentalement sur ce qu'il produit par sa propre sensorialité. Car, que désigne ce qu'on appelle habituellement la musicalité, la théâtralité, l'expressivité de mouvement dansé? Le lien radical qu'il y a entre la sensation et l'imaginaire. (Bernard, 1994, p.64)

These processes can be discovered by chance, but they can also be deliberately honed. We are all capable of exploring and learning in an embodied way; and sharing our unique modes of perceptions.

2.8.2 The Political and Creative Reasons for Devising

Devising is a collaborative form of creating theatre pieces where actors generate material based on their reaction to a theme, pre-existing work and/or their own experience. Used in a style of Physical Theatre that cross pollinates with the somatic practices and physicality of post-modern dance, *devising* also

describes the way in which many choreographic works are generated in contemporary dance. In *Devising in Process*, Mermikides and Smart explore the contexts from which it emerged and is currently practiced by different English physical theatre companies.

In *Physical Theatre: A Critical Introduction* (2007) Murray and Keefe use the term 'physical theatre/the physical in theatre' both to indicate the plurality of physical modes of performance and to hint at the absorption into theatre generally somatic concerns and practices once seen as experimental and decidedly non-establishment... 'with all its consequent implications for suggesting a diversity of forms built from different roots and technical traditions' (p.4), they identify a shared principle between various strands of historical influence on contemporary performance, suggesting that "physical theatre" ... traces its origins in our contemporary sense to those ideologies and manifestos which sought to reverse a dualism and hierarchy of work over body. (Mermikides & Smart, 2010, p. 7)

The above quote outlines how devising appeals to the ends of my choreographic research by subverting the dictatorial role of the director/choreographer, in favor of a more collaborative structure. This is not with the goal of denying the initiation of a project or the decision making of a director, but rather a political stand against giving all the credit of a collaborative process to an auteur. The strength in this type of postmodern leadership and art making is that it creates the possibility of creating work that benefits from the talents and contributions of multiple individuals, in an assemblage of intersectional and intertextual perspectives. Intertextuality – the influence of multiple sources, upsets traditional hierarchical relationships, and rejects the domination of the work over the body. 'The physical in the theatre' implies the inclusion of somatic centered practices as methods for both generating performance material and interpretations of it.

Dancers, meanwhile, influenced by the American postmodern and British new dance movements, have embraced physical theatre as a means of challenging conventional notions of what constitutes dance and disrupting the 'languages' of codified dance techniques, often by including spoken text within their work. In Germany, Pina Bausch' influential 'Tanztheatre' has dealt with embodied politics, especially gender politics, interrogating the body and physical behaviors as sites of cultural inscription. This kind of physical theatre, exemplified in Britain by DV8 and, more recently by Frantic Assembly 'was formed out of a desire to enable the development of the dancer as a creative artist with something to say' (Chamberlain and Yarrow, 2002, p, 7) and the rejection of the choreographer-dominated forms in order to emphasize the creative autonomy of the dancer in the process... their cultural inheritances impact upon their bodies and relationships. The images and actions created in the piece are deliberately suggestive of more than one meaning, refusing to 'contain' any pre-existing notion of 'universal truths' but rather an ambiguous and highly personal truth. (Mermikides, & Smart, 2010, p. 10)

I feel an artistic affiliation with physical theatre because of the inclusion of many types of movement, as well as the anti-authoritarian, left leaning and feminist philosophy behind it. It is a relevant vehicle for

Noland's theory of individual experience innovating 'Cultural inscription', exploring the gestural vocabulary we absorb from our social environments, where embodied pedestrian movement is learned culturally, but transformed by individual interoception. In this way the body observed and explored can communicate felt experience, and through this adaptive process move collectively forward without erasing the personal.

Gecko and theatre O to different degrees exemplify Dymphna Callery's definition of physical theatre as a style that involves the 'actor as-creator rather than the actor as- interpreter' (2001, p. 5). Callery suggests that physical theatre is a form in which 'working process is collaborative' (p.5) a belief that is widespread. Complicite (one of the best-known companies emerging from this tradition) for example states that 'what is essential is collaboration. A collaboration between individuals to establish an ensemble with a common physical and imaginative language'⁴. It is this collaborative agenda, especially the creative emancipation of the performer in rejection of the written text... Lecoq's emphasis on provoking the actor's imagination and creativity is a means of freeing actors from the tyranny of text, in order to create their own scenarios' (Chamberlain and Yarrow, 2002, p. 4) (Mermikides & Smart, 2010, p. 10)

In theatre, *Devising* challenges the pre-existing chain of command where the words and intention of the playwright and director dominate the process, and instead features the phenomenological experience of performers.

The mistrust of language, though, should not be understood as a simple rejection of the word or text. Artaud, Grotowski and Meyerhold, while each espousing the belief that the body was the locus of a deeper, more primal truth than language, all worked with play texts. What they rejected was the authority of the word and, by extension, the playwright. These practitioners sought plays, which addressed what they considered to be human concerns, yet treated the play text as a resource which could be cut up, interrogated, its 'authorial' meaning challenged through juxtaposition with image, action, gesture and vocal delivery. (Mermikides & Smart, 2010, p. 9).

There is also an innate intertextuality in placing lived physical reality on equal footing with the written word in this theatrical form, that echoes the merging hybrid movement styles within choreographic language. This process is paralleled in dance, where choreographed phrases are like words in a shared language, that can be recombined in idiosyncratic ways when performers are given a wide range in which to interpret, rather than strictly adhering to set choreography. We are in a time where we need to transcend the personal bias of dominant and privileged perspectives, and use artistic platforms to broadcast multiple voices. As ideal as this sounds, it is challenging to apply in real situations.

One of the contradictions of devising is that, while it is seen as essential to generate a sense of investment and ownership of ideas within the group, participants must be willing to give up

on individual ideas, or to see them edited, adapted, altered or even handed over to someone else in the service of the 'overall' idea, which often one emerging in the director's head. It is usually the director who selects and presents the original stimulus material (although she might ask devisers to then gather and share their own additional materials) and this will be something that is already meaningful to her. In my own case, I am aware that this predetermined 'meaning', which I might only recognize as a feeling, can become a filter through which I watch and respond to what is going on in the room, honing in on what seems to fit it and often missing (or, worse, dismissing) what does not. In other words, the operation of the director's emotional spotlight could have the effect of filtering out the very multiplicity of personal response which gives devising its richness and complexity, its defining quality of openness to interpretation as opposed the 'closed' meaning of the single-authored text. (Smart, 2014, p. 6).

For this reason, I will select and choreograph a bank of movement vocabulary as a shared resource we can integrate early in the process, so that new possibilities can emerge as from the bridges between us, and supporting internal dialogue with other levels of physicality, awareness, and perception.

Actors might initially feel like source work is a waste of time, (another silly theatre game), or a misuse of valuable time that could be used doing table work or scene work. The reality is: source saves time. Time spent up front getting the company on the same page, is time saved later from having to explain over and over again what the 'page' is. Coming to an agreement about goals and having a shared vocabulary saves time later, as everyone moves into staging, run-throughs tech, previews, opening. (Bogart & Landau, 2005, p.165)

My research aims to identify and support the multidisciplinary work transpiring within dancing, improvising, and composing movement, by playing with states, imagery, sense impressions and awareness alongside and in response to choreographed language. Trusting that layers of meaning will emerge from multi-dimensional exploration. I resonate with Post-modern dance that challenges formalism, representation and mind/body dualism epitomized by Yvonne Rainer's 1964 *No Manifesto*, and is reflected everyway in Montreal's contemporary dance and experimental theatre scene, especially in the approach of director/performer Jacob Wren whose work has been referred to as *post-mainstream*.

I often like the metaphor of art as a game. A game where you can push the rules toward their breaking point or make breakthroughs in the other direction by following the rules even more religiously than their intention. I often think there is a strange connection between freedom and rules. That freedom without rules is simply a freedom that refuses to acknowledge whatever unspoken rules might already be present. And that one can only increase one's artistic freedom by bringing rules into sharper focus. Also, when necessary, by breaking them. (Wren, 2018, p. 178).

Iterations research aligns with the 'rules' described in terms of sourcing from a shared practice that defines parameters such as: choreographic 'text, gestures, and tasks that performers can reinvent. As a creator, I

am coming into rehearsals with specific ideas, but also with an intention to respond to dancers' instinctual responses and the emerging internal logic of the work. This makes creating trust in the process, the collaborators and myself an essential facet of the project. The choreography and shared practices are meant to provide shortcuts and commonality (Bogart and Landau 2005, p. 163).

The reflections of feminist, ecological and anti-colonial thinkers inform the themes and praxis behind *Iterations*. I plan on distilling the content I want in the work, and weaving this essentials into the Praxis of the creation, as opposed to overlaying it afterwards. I am inspired by works of art that speak to the fact that we cannot fight the forces damaging the world by replicating their patterns of exploitation, objectification, and overconsumption. Alternative methods are needed to bring healing to the internalized messaging from capitalist and patriarchal sources, that pushes us to forsake wellbeing and collaboration in the name of productivity and individual success. But that in reality bring about exhaustion and alienation, and are not gratifying in the short term, nor sustainable in the long-term. Instead I am inspired by the philosophy behind statements like 'The personal is political' (Carol Hanish 1969) espoused by second wave feminists and even more poignantly 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House' stated by Audre Lorde in 1979, decrying the erasure of women of color and homosexual women within the feminist movement. Though taken out of context, these famous quotes illustrate how powerfully personal ethics and praxis can affect the world, and how if we want to transform it, we need to integrate our values into our practice.

Instead of internalizing toxic ways of exploiting human resources inside of art making by monetizing, objectifying, instrumentalizing and silencing those we create with, we can instead aim to generate practices within cultures that spark and sustain life and creativity. I am not interested in creating art that centred on fleeting, unattainable, unsustainable abstracted beauty divorced from the complexities of life, especially imagery that reduces women to beautiful objects to be coveted, and dancers as sexy, youthful bodies performing tricks for entertainment. Work can be so much more than competition and survival, and dance making can be more than beautiful imagery and spectacle created through exhausting practices. Recognizing that time and relationships sustain us, by bringing pleasure, trust, communication and rest into the process, is important and not forsaking them in the name of productivity and individual success. The personal is political. On a small scale I want to promote, learning and sharing in community, building bridges between subjective points of view and supporting flexible but strong boundaries that protect our

bodies, ideas, and identities as we try to share and communicate them with each other, our extended communities and society.

The major is a structural tendency that organizes itself according to predetermined definitions of value. The minor is a force that courses through it, unmooring its structural integrity, problematizing its normative standards...Yet while the grand gestures of micropolitics most easily sum up the changes that occurred to alter the field, it is the minoritarian tendencies that initiate the subtle shifts that created the conditions for this, or any change [...] The minor is a continual variation on experience. It has a mobility not given to the major, but open to flux. In variation is in change, indeterminate. But indeterminacy, because of its wildness, is often mistaken as unrigorous, flimsy, its lack of solidity mistaken for a lack of consistency. The minor thus cast aside, overlooked, or forgotten in the interplay of major chords. This is the downside of the minor but also its strength: that it does not have the full force of pre-existing status, of a given structure, of a predetermined metric, to keep it alive. It is out of time, untimely rhythmically inventing its own pulse. The minor isn't known in advance. It never reproduces itself in its own image. (Manning, 2016, p. 2).

Embodied dance can allow us to share the experience of being alive in profound transcendent, inscendent (internal revelation) and everyday ways. Creating spaces to transform our shadows, share our hardships, find inspiration in our imperfect selves, and in connecting to and learning from larger and older forces in the nature that surround and protects us, and that we are intrinsically a part of.

In the words of Thomas Berry, "We are quintessentially integral with the universe. In ourselves the universe is revealed to itself as we are revealed in the universe" (The Great Work, 32).² And when we learn to inscend, we can have a felt experience of "our small part in the larger cosmic orchestra," and do what we were meant for (20). (Creutzberg, 2020, p. 2)

2.8.3 Challenges for Improvising Interpreters

In dance, improvisation can be seen as disrupting the practice of repeating 'set' choreography, despite the fact that in many domains, learning and recombining skills in the moment is an accepted norm and even an innate capacity. Here Bogart and Landau discuss this phenomenon in their method, Viewpoints.

The parallels between this philosophy of sports and that of Viewpoints are both astonishing and once realized, very obvious. Both sports and Viewpoints involve play, the kind of play children engage in - that of reacting to something that happens in spontaneous fashion, without self-consciousness, judgement, or hesitation. In sports, as in so many other things in life, we can once again witness the lessons of Viewpoints in action. We continue to learn about the timeless art of taking what is given you (whether a ground ball, a toy figure, or a sudden move onstage) and out of it, making something wonderful. There are as many ways to describe this state, these actions, as there are cultures and activities. There is "the Oceanic state," coined by Sigmund Freud; there is the concept of "Flow" in Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *Flow: The Psychology of*

Optimal Experience (Harper Perennial, New York, 1991); the "Peak- Experiences" defined by A. H. Maslow in "Religious Aspects of Peak-Experiences" - (in his book Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, Penguin, New York, 1994); and essayist Diane Ackerman's phrase "Deep Play" which she borrowed from eighteenth century philosopher Jeremy Bentham for describing those moments when "levered by ecstasy, one springs out of one's mind.... Watch the way animals flock. Watch the way a school of fish shifts direction as if one. Watch people waiting for a bus or train— when one person leans out to check for the oncoming vehicle, others immediately follow. Watch people on the subway or watching a movie—when one person shifts weight or angle, there is a ripple reaction that follows from one to another. The ultimate lesson of Viewpoints, after all, might be one of humility. We did not invent a system that the world mirrors. Rather, it is the natural world itself that holds such timeless and consistent patterns of behavior. It is our struggle to name the patterns and then apply them to our art. (Bogart & Landau, 2005, pp. 209-210)

Our brains have evolved with the capacities for both invention and pattern recognition (Batson & Wilson 2014) and improvisation allows us to utilize these processes in our art making, not only in generating material, but in recapturing and developing it. How can we nuance the processes at play when we work with improvisation in the act of creation? Not only does somebody need to generate movement, but it also has to be retrieved and defined. How can this responsibility be shared amongst choreographers and dancers? Facilitating these actions is something that I am interested in researching because the challenge of moving between conscious control and being in flow with an unconscious source is a key part of our craft. How do we identify and clarify what is essential from improvised material and develop the capacity to remember, repeat and renew these actions once they are identified? How can we develop language around our relationship to the time, symbolism and quality of feeling in movement? How do we negotiate our connection to the source of inspiration and the cognitive choice making that goes on around it? I want to collectively research the skills within rehearsal processes that support this type of work. The challenges I have outlined around generating and developing material for dancers are enunciated clearly in this interview with dancer choreographer Andrew Turner, in conversation with Johanna Bienaise.

A capacity for improvisation is super important. To be able to size up in real time how to add or not add to what is happening around you; being able to reproduce that too. One of the biggest challenges that I've come across as a dancer is recreating material that comes out of an improvisation setting, when the choreographer says I like that and films it and you've got to take it, relearn it from the video and make it live. Some of the most challenging things that I've ever done are when you redo it and it's almost there but not quite. And then you do it the next day and it keeps getting chopped down and you get notes from the choreographer who thinks it should be 'more like this, the other day it was more like that.' Ok you try to do it that way, and it just keep losing its vitality as you go, because you are thinking so much about what it should or shouldn't be. That's a super tough one and I don't know how that could be taught, other than to have very strong sensorial memory, being able to remember where you were that first time,

and what it was. Identifying the things, you were working with. (Andrew Turner, Levac, Bienaise 2016)

Intricate movement patterns require time to process, regardless of if they are derived from improvisation or mimicking a choreographer, but creators, asking dancers to improvise, don't have the experience of performing of the movements they select. This task then falls to the dancers for hire. There is very little work in the rehearsal process that specifically prepares the dancer for the desired aesthetic feats, other than the work itself. In my experience, an inverse phenomenon occurs with choreographers who are still physically generating material, where they often lack the skill articulated by Turner, of remembering the material they improvise with the specificity expected of their dancers. In the scenario in which the dancers in the room mimic and retain material generated quickly by a choreographer improvising, the emphasis placed on speed of retention and production can lead to an over-simplification resulting in more generic vocabulary and/or physical short cuts that can also lead to injury. Rather than co-investigating movement ideas, the model I have experienced was often needlessly competitive and counterproductive, because the emphasis on immediate results negated the potential of developing innovative ideas. This method also often compromises dancers' bodies, as well as their performances and leaves choreographers' work shy of realizing its full potential, because dancers aren't given time to find efficient movement pathways as they learn sequences. Speed seems to be high on the least of desirable qualities in dancers. Picking the quickest study is standard practice for most auditions, but in my experience as a choreographer and teacher I have not found that the quickest learners are necessarily the most nuanced performers.

Puis dans les habilités, c'est sûr que, j'aime la vitesse d'une certaine façon, fait qu'il y a, il faut que la personne soit assez vive d'esprit pour absorber non seulement la demande, mais le changement perpétuel de la demande, et de la tâche ou tu sais de l'évolution. J'aime les gens avec la vitesse d'esprit, la capacité de synthétiser beaucoup, beaucoup, beaucoup d'informations. Parce qu'un danseur doit gérer énormément d'informations, donc cette capacité de s'adapter, de comprendre, une espèce d'autonomie aussi par rapport à sa propre compréhension des enjeux. (Danièle Desnoyers en entrevue avec Levac & Bienaise 2016).

This comment from a well-established and respected choreographer, shows the need for dancers to have a capacity for autonomy, memorisation and adaptation, it also speaks to the elevated expectations placed upon them in the milieu, with little responsibility for facilitating them. As mentioned, many works are created through a 'devising' process, where dancers are asked to generate material and use their individual somatic signature, as opposed to striving to mold themselves into the choreographer's ideal. (Smart 2014, Cools 2014). When this happens, the time and value for editing, refining the actual movement mechanics,

solving spatial and interpretive problems are reduced and left to dancers and rehearsal directors to figure out, because it is no longer the choreographer's job. The disconnection between training and creating in the minds of choreographers, resulting in the lack of time given to the actual work of figuring out how to dance movement, is a crucial weak link in the process of dance creation.

2.8.4 Improvisation

Andrade deconstructing Michel Bernard's article on Improvisation entitled, Du "bon" usage de l'improvisation en danse ou du mythe à l'expérience (Bernard, 2006, p. 130), « ...la compréhension de l'improvisation, en tant que processus qui permet la création instinctive ou imaginaire de quelque chose imprévu, capable de subvertir l'habitude » (Andrade 2015, p. 63). Andrade examines Bernard suggestion that there are three myths around the notion of improvisation:

1. The false or naïve belief that the subject is free, that disregards the systemic influences of institutions on the individual.
2. That creativity is generated from the first person, a notion that ignores the codification experienced by the individual through society, their training and their professional experiences, as well as the setting and context in which the improvisation takes place.
3. The way that improvisation forces the individual to confront themselves, revealing a primordial identity '*en une présence instantanée qui va ainsi déconsidérer la différence qui habite l'altérité originaire qui pousse notre sentir.*'

There are limits to what we sense and invent, but corporality can highlight a natural mechanism of micro differentiations, (what Steve Paxton names *the small dance*). These micro-adjustments trigger numerous ephemeral sensations (or even gestalts) that can be creatively amplified, modulated, altered and destabilised in multiple ways. Bernard asserts that dancing alters states, triggering operations on three distinct levels:

1. Postural & Alignment (Godard's pre-movements)
2. Movements through space & gestures, dancer is a receptacle & producer, projector of fictions, drawing shapes in space, projecting imaginary objects with their volume, form, colour, texture, significance, weight, functional purpose, etc.
3. Expressions, automatic affective impulses

In improvisation the subject is mixed in the flesh by all of the influences of their history, training and the environment and what is produced isn't necessarily a revelation of the performer's deepest self, but rather a collage of influences from their lived experience and the present moment. The info-signs derived from these multiple emotional and sensorial sources move through us rapidly and demonstrate/articulate aspects of reality and imagined fictions. They are incoming information. Gestures are the fluid by which meaning is transported, an alchemic moment when an element moves from one form to another. (Andrade, 2015, pp. 63-64).

To return to previous points. Since we are often pushed to a state of hyper vigilance in our post- industrial, technological connected society, connecting to other parts of ourselves is about releasing accumulated tension, as well as cultivating capacities. The practice I initiated in the research, and the results emerging from it point to a need for dancers engaged in the roles of participants and improvisers to be afforded more agency within the rehearsal process and in performance.

Erin Manning's writings though have also caused me to reflect on how agency may be another extension of notions of individuality embedded in capitalist modes of thinking. The relational and intersubjective aspects that can be created by a shared practice are the most interesting to me at this point. Not erasing individuality through conformity or submission to a group, but rather to cocreate intersubjective work that combines the strengths, idiosyncrasies, and perspectives of each person. In so doing, choosing something beyond an individual auteur's vision, like many others who have chosen the process of devising.

For now, I am interested in forgoing the idea (and ego) of an individual genius, and bypassing the methods I have critiqued, in favor of the potential innovation and connections that can only occur through collaboration and more democratic interactions. If art making is to help society adapt to the urgency of these times, it seems to me that learning to problem solve, communicate, listen, adapt, cooperate and organize are essential skills that need to be learned and practiced. This form of cocreation can be a microcosm for revolutionary changes. As Adrienne Maree Brown says in an interview with Krista Tippett on the podcast *On Being*, 'It's a battle for imagination. We are living inside of a vision that is destroying the planet and all of us are complicit in the structures that keep these destructive patterns in place.'

I chose a career in dance to be outside of the mainstream economy, only to find that we are often enacting a very brutish form of resource extraction, objectification, and monetization of lived experience. Abusive and demeaning behavior between colleagues without protective controls happens in our schools and working environments that would not be tolerated in most workplaces. So not only are we not modeling progressive behaviors, but we are also behind the mainstream in terms of accountability and protection

of human resources. Much of the destructive behavior occurs because of fragile egos and individuals wanting credit so that they can advance their careers and sell their work. The irony is that common practices do not lead to optimal performances and undermine performance and creation. Whether the motivation is ethical, or excellence based, dance creators would do well to learn from sport training in terms of working to support physiological and mental health. There is also knowledge gained in devising collaborative practices in physical theatre, gleaned from postmodern dance and progressive political circles, that can be applied more broadly within the contemporary dance milieu. Elements such dramaturgical reflection, space for differences of opinion expressed in discussions, somatic awareness, and progressive dance technique that can be integrated not only into the content of work, but into the processes, cycles and mechanisms that structure, support, and frame the work – and sustain those embodying it. Finally there is room for more empathy, respect and solidarity between artists and a need to consider how we treat each other while we make dances.

CHAPITRE 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Iterations – Artistic Periodization towards Sustainable Creation, is a research creation for a devised contemporary dance piece. This project approached dancers' work from a holistic perspective, testing strategies for supporting their activities within the development of the work in sustainable ways in the short, mid, and long term. Working towards strategies for sustainable creation, this research used a modulating schedule which included facilitation, video review and periodized hybrid training within rehearsals for a new work. Initiated in response to a pervasive problem explained in Chapter 1, the strategies used address problematic rehearsal activities that are often incongruous with choreographic goals, and which cause injuries from exhaustion and overuse in dancers. (Fortin, 2009, p. 64). These stratagems acknowledged the dancers' work and provided them with pre-abilities, tools and agency with which to engage in choreographic propositions. The tactics used aimed to balance power inequities within rehearsal culture and tested ways of offering dancers a voice in the process, physiological and psychological support, and objective means to judge their own performance. This research studied the impact of these methods on the project as both a workspace and as an artistic endeavor.

This research creation experimented with the implementation of periodization of training, using project management and communication to create time for physical preparation, recovery and problem solving within the creative and production process, using a hybrid mix of choreography and improvisation to collaboratively devise a dance piece. The initial production objective was to create a live performance, but due to pandemic restrictions the performances were converted to two filming days. *Iterations* used a hybrid choreographic language and theatrical and somatic tasks modulated by improvisation tools. Strategies employed to achieve performative goals included developing and using multi-faceted Praxis (hybrid practice) as a starting point of pre-abilities needed for the work. This practice was periodized with a modulating schedule, progressive demands in training and performing, and included a slight tapering of activities prior to performance. The project also addressed psychological periodization and collaborative communication with daily check-ins, weekly viewing of rehearsal recordings and discussions

of rehearsal documentation, and adaptation of activities in response to dancers’ feedback around their physical and mental state and artistic needs. The research gathered and analyzed the impact of these activities to develop recommendations and practices that support artists’ mental and physical work sustainably inside of an independent creative process. Drawn from non-linear periodization models which use progressive alternating resistance and rest cycles that adapt to variability in athletes state and environment, rather than following prescribed programs and gathering quantitative data based on biological measures. This project was tested on two professional dancers between 35-45, who are experienced with set and improvised choreography, as well as collaborative creation. Since concepts from sport were adapted to the variations in needs, practices, culture, and funding of a dance context, I am naming the methods used in this research *Artistic Periodization*.

3.2 Strategies Tested

The following activities were designed and tested for Artistic Periodization:

1. a) Initial fitness assessment over 2 days with dancers & dramaturg, b) Movement analysis and aesthetic assessment of my previous choreography, c) Designing a hybrid training syllabus to generate pre-abilities based on evaluations;
2. Employing a progressive hybrid training practice to develop pre-abilities: fundamental skills, capacities and a shared verbal, compositional and movement language;
3. Alternating morning and afternoon rehearsal times over 3-4 days during the week, to include space for recuperation and integration;
4. Using 1 week break between two 3-week meso-cycles;
5. Tapering 5th & 6th weeks, containing 2 filming days separated by a 5-day interval.
6. Daily check-in discussions to hear dancers needs and adapt rehearsals breaks, training and tasks;
7. Video watching & discussions as facilitation strategies for incorporating recuperation & integration;
8. Self-reflection through studio time & questionnaires;
9. Collaboration on artistic decision-making;
10. Dramaturg perspective, assistance, kinesthetic empathy thru choreographer/dramaturg dancing;
11. Documenting rehearsals, training, discussions and dancing for reference & reflection.

Table 3.1 Strategies

3.3 Methodological Paradigm

McIntyre describes the ways in which Participant Action Research (PAR) engages researchers and participants in collective '*reflection, investigation and decision-making around and issue*':

These aims are achieved through a cyclical process of exploration, knowledge construction, and action at different moments throughout the research process [...] As the PAR process evolves, these and other questions are re-problematized in the light of critical reflection and dialogue between and among participating actors. It is by actively engaging in critical dialogue and collective reflection that the participants of PAR recognize that they have a stake in the overall project. Thus, PAR becomes a living dialectical process, changing the researcher, the participants, and the situations in which they act (McTaggart, 1997a). (McIntyre, 2008).

This project used *Heuristic* and *Participant Action Research* methods to apply practical strategies for linking theory and practice in a research creation. Based in a pragmatic approach to educational research espoused by figures such as Dewey and Whitehead, Action Research stems from a method of self-reflective research (Glanz, 2014, p.11). Dance makers developing a research creation are always engaged in a feedback loop in which their ideas and choices are fed into a circuit, yielding results through the understanding and embodiment of the dancers they work with. The self-reflective process of wanting to improve one's practice and decision-making inspiring this research also ties into to educational model of Action Research that relies on the same feedback mechanisms. Whitehead, and McNiff (2006) testify to research which shows how new practical and theoretical knowledge emerges from practitioners intentionally studying their own praxis.

Incorporating feedback and progressive learning as it emerges from process, is at the core of the application of periodized training and collaborative artistic research this project engages in. Communication and reviewing documentation facilitated self-reflective processes and feedback on the wellbeing of artists and the relational and artistic aspects of the work. These devices served as tools for gathering information as ideas were discovered and learning occurred during the process, and, in retrospect, after its completion.

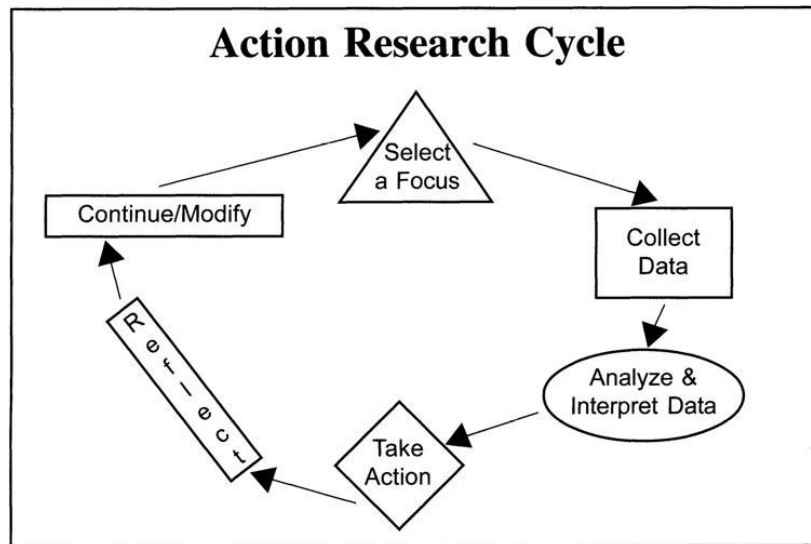


Figure 3.1 Action Research Cycle

The nature of this research is two-fold. On the one hand, the artistic explorations of physical states yield experiential, sensorial, perceptual, and emotional results that are symbolically and kinaesthetically evocative. On the other hand, the methods facilitate the work in a practical manner, and involve physical training, discussions and watching videos. Rather than recording quantitative data, as is frequently done in sports settings, artistic periodization research adopts qualitative methods more aligned with adaptive embodied artistic practices, and prioritizes self-reflective and collective learning through experiential, rather than measurable processes. The nature of peoples' subjectivity was intensified by the shifting circumstances of pandemic times.

Reflective practice is a process by which educational leaders take the time to contemplate and assess the efficacy of programs, products, and personnel in order to make judgments about the appropriateness or effectiveness of these aspects so that improvements or refinements might be achieved. Research-oriented leaders have a vision that guides their work. As they plan and work to improve their schools, they collect and analyze data to better inform their decisions. Research-oriented leaders are engaged in ongoing self-study in which they assess the needs of their schools, identify problem areas, and develop strategies for becoming more effective. (Glanz, J. 2014, p. 22).

3.4 Research Activity Description

The main principle of periodization training is to improve the athlete as a whole person and is developed on a psycho-physiological basis that includes physiological, psychological, biomechanical, and skill elements. (Wyon 2010, p. 67).

The research creation *Iterations* adapted choreographic activities to support dancers' wellbeing during the creation of a contemporary dance work. Using a holistic view of dancers' schedules and background, this project tested methods to incorporate preparation, recuperation, and communication into the rehearsal process to nurture intertwined research and artistic goals. In this research creation, the concept of artistic periodization serves as inspiration for creating strategies to connect the two.

In the *generative* phase of *Iterations*, the following activities were used to explore the application of artistic periodization: a modulating schedule included rehearsals 3-4 times a week and included at least one morning to create gaps of longer than 24 hours and leave space for recuperation. Training sessions were held inside of rehearsals to generate pre-abilities as previously stated, and to also save dancers travel time and minimize their activities during the day prior to a rehearsal. Video review was included in these rehearsals to create breaks from repetitive work and to facilitate conversations around what was happening visually in the work. Activities incorporated into rehearsals:

1. Training Assessment (July, 2020)

- a. Pre-study: Questionnaire capture of dancers' training practices & previous creation/production experiences
- b. Praxis - hybrid training: preparatory conditioning to build strength, stamina, coordination patterns and warm-up, choreography, improvisation to develop interpretive capacities in artistic tasks

2. Communication: daily check-ins, conversations around the work, research methods and goals

3. Periodization (August, September & early October)

- a. Pre-study training, dancers independently do moderate cardio training for 12-20 minutes 3-4 times a week.
- b. Modulation of scheduled activities within two meso-cycles (3 weeks phases) & micro-cycles (individual weeks)
 - i. Generative phase (2 weeks)
 - ii. Editing phase (1 week)
 - iii. Assemblage (1 week)
 - iv. Refinement (1 week)
 - v. Production (1 week)
- c. Tapering physical exertion prior to final activities, which replicated performances (2 days of filming where rehearsal hours doubled from 3.5 to 7).

3.4.1 Documentation

- Video documentation and viewing in rehearsals to create an inter-relational object to facilitate the development of the piece through observation, conversation to analyze how the work was evolving, clarify goals, articulate vision, and provide physical rest.
- Film, goal in lieu of performance, archive, and support material for future development.

3.4.2 Limits of Study

- Only 2 dancers, both female between 35-45 of same cultural and dance background.
- Study took place over a relatively short period. To truly test the application of Artistic Periodization it should happen over a longer period.
- No support team of athletic trainers or medical professionals.
- Dual roles of both the researcher and choreographer imbedded in one person.
(It would be interesting to design a study for other choreographers work with different priorities or pre-existing repertoire.)
- Insufficient funding to pay the dancers to take time off for recuperation, or to recreate a true production or touring situation.

3.5 Research Field

This research process took place during the fall of 2020 during the shutdown of the Covid-19 pandemic, with special permission from the UQAM to work in person at the Dance Department. Due to pandemic restrictions, the piece was filmed on two occasions, but not performed in front of a live audience.

3.5.1 Dancers

The study participants were Mairéad Filgate and Melina Stinson, two established professional dancers, with active independent careers as dancers, creators, and teachers. Working with peers whose performance qualities I understood nourished all aspects of the research. The focus on sustainability translates as career longevity, so dancers in their late thirties and forties were selected. Their rich histories provided experiential knowledge to draw on and they reciprocally appreciated the care and consideration given to preparing and not overworking their bodies. Both were Anglophones, born outside of Quebec from Scottish and Irish backgrounds. This narrowed the field of the study but was not done expressly. It shows an unconscious bias on my part.

The dancers and I have similar backgrounds, having studied at dance conservatories and worked with companies and independent creators, as well as making our own work in Quebec and across Canada.

Melina Stinson is an active professional dancer, singer, actor who also teaches a preparatory mix of Somatics, Pilates and conditioning to pre-professionals at EDCM, as well as adult populations. Originally from Calgary, Melina Stinson discovered urban dance at the age of 16. While studying environmental science at the University of Calgary, she took her first contemporary dance class and eventually earned a BA in dance. This passion led her to complete her training at *L'École de danse contemporaine de Montréal*. From May 2009, she has worked with several companies and choreographers, such as: Battery Opera, Bouge de Là (Création Ô Lit!), Caroline Dusseault, Carré des Lombes (Tournée Dévorer le ciel), Gabrielle Martin, Geneviève Bolla, Human Playground, Interlope, Lara Kramer, Lost and Found (Alejandro delÉon), Manon Oigny and WooMeMyth. She has also created short pieces presented at events and festivals in Montreal, Calgary and Winnipeg. Currently, Melina performs with Dorian Nuskind-Oder's Delicate Beast Company (Memory Palace) and has also been with Theater Junction (Calgary) for 4 years. Alongside dance, Melina has a fascination for the practice of yoga and pilates, which she has been teaching in Montreal since 2009 and 2012 respectively.

Mairéad Filgate is a contemporary dance artist currently dividing her time between Toronto and Montreal. A graduate of the School of Toronto Dance Theatre and the Etobicoke School of the Arts, she has performed extensively throughout Canada and beyond with the Danny Grossman Dance Company, tiger princess dance projects, Public Recordings, Dusk Dances, Bouchard Danse, Chartier Danse, Bill Coleman, Gabby Kamino, Laurie Raymond, and Kaeja d'Dance, among others. As a choreographer, Mairéad creates both independently and collaboratively. She makes regular sojourns to New York City to study the work of Trisha Brown and explores dance communities around the globe whenever she can find an opportunity. Mairéad recently received a Bachelor of Arts with High Distinction in Women & Gender Studies and Sociology from the University of Toronto. She served as the Chair for the Board of Directors of the Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists from 2016 to 2018.

I wanted to work with these two individuals because I respect them as performers and they embody the raw femme strength I was interested in exploring in this work. Melina and Mairéad are both intelligent, kind, open, articulate, motivated and lively individuals who are inspiring and stimulating to work with .

3.5.2 Music

Original music was composed for the work by Annick Brémault, Tony Spina & James Annett.

Aloysius Bell is the nom de plume of Winnipeg-born, Montreal-based singer- songwriter **Annick Brémault** whose music is atmospheric, feminine, poetic and creates potent imaginative landscapes. Having spent much of her musical life as a member of various formations, namely the Juno award-winning soul/pop group Chic Gamine, Brémault sets her sights on the full voicing of her artistic imaginings. For her, Aloysius Bell is about turning things around. Fever dreams become songs, heartbreak turns into resolve and secrets into full-blown confessions. Light, soulful vocals, intricate, ear-catching melody served over lyrics that come from deep and quiet listening.

Tony Spina is a professional drummer and percussionist for over 25 years, who I have worked with in the context of teaching technique classes and improvisational research. He composed to melodic and percussive works that provided the opportunity to engaged rhythmically with the material in subtle ways. Tony holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Jazz Studies from Concordia University (Montreal, Quebec) and is a graduate of Vanier College (Montreal, Quebec). He has played in numerous projects and been on tour in Canada, the United States and Europe, notably alongside Annabelle Chvostek and Victory Chimes. In 2010, Tony also studied improvised music for dance with Katie Duck in Amsterdam (The Netherlands). He has collaborated with Concordia University as a musical accompanist in dance since 2013, while working with the Montreal School of Contemporary Dance, but also with the dance program of Cegep Saint-Laurent and Modo Yoga.

James Annett is a is a violist, multi-instrumentalist and composer, who I have worked with in the context of improvisational performances between musicians and dancers at the Sala Rossa, entitled 5 on 5. James composed ambient and aggressive electronic soundscapes that echoed the hybridity, and the somatic states explores in the work. His music explores the intersections between diverse styles of music including jazz, experimental, rock and folk music in an improvisational setting. He has performed alongside Ellwood Epps, Eric Chenaux and Rainer Wiens, and performs regularly at events and festivals in Canada including the Mardi Spaghetti and IMOO concert series in Montreal and Ottawa. Recent activities include workshops at the Banff Centre and at SIM New York where he studied privately with the violists Mat Maneri and Eyvind Kang. He has also studied privately with violinists Josh Zubot and Malcolm Goldstein. He performed with the Ratchet Orchestra at the 2014 edition of the FIMAV festival.

3.5.3 Dramaturge

Brianna Lombardo completed her professional training at the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, and then worked with various international artists in Europe on a Chalmers Arts Fellowship. As an independent dancer, she worked in Toronto with Michael Trent and Matjash Mrozewski and in Montreal with Isabelle Van Grimde and Jean-Pierre Perreault, before joining O Vertigo from 2004 to 2010. After six years with the company, she became a freelancer and worked closely with Mélanie Demers (MAYDAY), Jacques Poulin-Denis (Grand Poney), Frédérick Gravel (Grouped'ArtGravelArtGroup), Caroline Laurin-Beaucage, Martin Messier, Sasha Ivanochko, Montréal Danse, and Daniel Leveillé Danse. She is presently in creation for a new work with Parts+Labour_Danse. In addition to working as a dancer, she is a certified yoga teacher with a focus on yoga for dancers, and has been teaching O Vertigo, MAYDAY and Frédérick Gravel repertory since 2010.

3.5.4 Choreographer/Researcher

Montreal based dance artist, **Erin Flynn**, has been making and performing contemporary dance for the stage and the screen since the late 90's. Originally from Winnipeg, Erin has performed across Canada, France, Holland and Germany, with the companies *Ruth Cansfield Dance*, *Trip Dance*, *Van Grimde Corps Secrets*, *Public Recordings*, *Tusket Dance*, as well as the works of several independent choreographers. Under the banner *Pixel Projects*, Flynn has created original live works funded by the *Canada Council for the Arts* and the *Conseil des Arts et des lettres de Québec*, as well as independent cabaret events that for emerging choreographers of the mid 2000's. Flynn's choreographic works: *Alcove*, *The Shallow End*, *le Complexe Jeanne d'Arc*, *From Ashes Comes the Day*, *Catalyzer* have been presented by *Tangente*, *Studio 303*, *Le Gesù*, *New Dance Horizons*, *FADO*, *Young Lungs Dance Exchange*, *Les Printemps de la Danse*, *Vue sur la Relève*, Toronto's *Series 8:08*, *Kinetic Studio* of Halifax, the *Aoyama Roundhouse Theatre* in Tokyo, Japan and *LIG Art Hall* in Seoul, Korea. In 2022, she collaborated on the film *Forward/Back* with Mistaya Hemingway and Isabelle Poirier. Erin teaches in the professional training programs at *Concordia University*, *UQÀM* and the *National Theatre School of Canada*. She has contributed podcasts to *Territoires Partagés*, written for *de Maisonneuve magazine*, the *Montreal Mirror* and contributed a chapter the dance anthology, *Partager la danse*, edited by Johanna Bienaise and Manon Levac. Her master's research creation, *Iterations* (UQÀM), was presented at the *Healthy Dancer Canada conference* in 2021 and applied to Sustainability research in the teaching technique in collaboration with the *Centre for Teaching and Learning* at Concordia in the fall of 2022. Flynn recently joined Masami Mikami's *Komorebi Arts Project* and was invited to be artist in residence in 2024 at *Concordia's Contemporary Dance department*.

3.5.5 Assessment Period with Dancers

Movement analysis of dancers was conducted on July 14 and 15 in July 2020. These two sessions began with a warmup followed by exploration of three improvisation scores. The sessions were used to introduce the dancers to the research ideas and methods. They were also used for information gathering, using criteria and knowledge based on my years as a dance instructor and Pilates trainer, as well as to assess technical and artistic strengths and challenges. I used this information to design a progressive training plan for each research period, with the goal of aligning the dancers' needs and abilities with the technical demands and choreographic aesthetic of my work.

3.5.6 Iterations Timeline

Lundi	Mardi	Mercredi	Jeudi	Vendredi
	13 octobre, 12-14h (2)	14 octobre 13h-16h30 (3.5)	15 octobre 14h-16h30 (2.5)	16 octobre 14h - 18 (4)
19 octobre 12- 15h30, (3.5)	repos	21 octobre 13h-16h30, (3.5)	22 octobre 13h30- 16h, (3.5) Erin	23 octobre 14h-18h (4)
26 octobre 12-15h30, (3.5)	27 octobre 9h45 à 13h15, (3.5)	28 octobre 13h-16h30, (3.5)	29 octobre 13h30- 16h, (3.5) Erin	30 octobre 14h-18h (4)
2 novembre 12-15h30, (3.5) Congé danseurs Erin	Repos	4 novembre 13h-16h, (3.5) Congé danseurs Erin	5 novembre 13h- 16h (3.5) Congé danseurs Erin	6 novembre 14h-18h (4) Congé danseurs Erin
5. 16 novembre 12-15h30, (3.5)	10 novembre 9h45-13h15, (3.5)	11 novembre 13h-16h30, (3.5)	12 novembre 13h30- 16h, (3.5) - Erin	13 novembre 14h-18h (4)
	17 novembre 11-14h30, (3.5)	18 novembre 18h-22h (4)	19 novembre 18h-22h (4)	21 novembre 10h-17h (6) Tournage
23 novembre 12-15h30, (3.5)	Repos	25 novembre 18h-22h (4)	26 novembre 18h-22h (4)	27 novembre 11h-18h (7) Tournage

Table 3.2 Iterations Timeline

3.6 Data Collection Methods

1. Questionnaire: asking dancers their artistic experiences, preferences and learning styles.
(Annex A)

These were used to get to know the participants more in depth in terms of their strengths and tastes - and react in consequence while working. The questionnaire was also used as a device to initiate self-reflection, preparing the terrain for experimentation in the areas of training, generating, practicing, and performing work. Finally, they were used to signal that the dancers' opinions and thoughts were a part of the study and would serve as material for the theories being developed.

2. Recorded documentation of discussions, rehearsals, runs of sections. The rehearsals documentation was used as a memory aid for ideas that emerged from discussions and improvisations. Watching and reviewing recordings outside of rehearsal gave me space to digest and reflect on ways in which I could develop physical qualities further, merge ideas, improve clarity and confidence and find answers I didn't have in the moment. The artistic and research contents are intermingled within this process. The reflective nature of it provided other perspectives, allowing me to hear the way I was proposing ideas and how they were being received and could be developed from another vantage point. Reviewing documentation in rehearsal accelerated learning and communication and provided an objective tool for dancers to access their performance and understand the piece holistically.
 - Sections of rehearsals were filmed twice a week on a video camera, while discussions and extra material was gathered using a phone to record.
3. The final performance footage was documented on two separate days, by videographers: Sonya Stefan (Saturday), followed by Stefan Verna and Clark Ferguson (Friday). This footage allowed me to see the results of the work and assess it physically and artistically. These videos provided a means to gage the choreographic and performative qualities achieved from a distance from the creative and choreographic process and to envision ways of applying the research to the development of future pieces and to my teaching, choreography, and dancing practices. It was also used as a tool to compare the relational data with and assess the effects of the periodized training.

4. Semi-structured Interviews with an explicitation (Vermesh) interview specialist (Caroline Charbonneau), week after performances: dancers & choreographer. These interviews were the main method of data collection and through their analysis provided the categories described in the results and discussion chapters.
5. Choreographer Journal: This element was used as a tool during the process and provided a trace of my experiences afterwards. It provided a reference for the volume, intensity, and timing of when specific methods were used at different stages in the process, as well as documenting how the process was impacting on myself. Since so much was being discussed in rehearsal with other people, the journal provided a space where I could problem solve alone and listen to creative inspiration. This journal, along with my time alone in studio, provided the space to work out the content and order of the practice and choreographic phrases, as well as combinations of sections. During the research process the journal was a place to document comments which stood out from the dancers and became a tool for incorporating their suggestions or requests into subsequent rehearsals. It was also where I planned the order of rehearsals activities after discussions with the dramaturge, Brianna, post rehearsals.

3.7 Artistic Periodization Methods

3.7.1 Description of Rehearsal Training practices and adaptations

Initial check-in's were used at the beginning of rehearsals. Hearing about the dancers physical and mental states provided feedback about previous rehearsals, making it possible to adapt the rehearsals activities and decide how and what mixture of the warmups should favour conditioning, somatics, dance vocabulary, as well as which the parts of the body needed to be warmed up, stretched or strengthened. Participating in the physical research allowed me to feel the effects of the work and develop a perspective of where to focus. Through these conversations with the dancers, I could gauge how the dancers were reacting to the process and improve the balance of increased resistance training while avoiding dancer exhaustion. Watching videos enabled decision making around which technical or fitness areas needed cross training assistance to improve performance, without necessarily cleaning the movements themselves. For example: Frenetic movements of the arms and spine accompanied the balletic movements of *ronde de jambe en l'air* with a tilted axis, challenged balance and control of the supporting leg. To reinforce stability, Irene Dowd's Helix phrase was an excellent resource for working on proprioception and balance, by articulating the feet, legs in hips sockets with eyes and arms moving in opposite directions. Lower body joints were

also fortified by incorporating physio exercises for external rotators (mainly gluteus medias), ankle stability (leg movements on one standing leg with eyes closed) and exercises that work the inner line of the leg from the adductors all the way down to the big toes.

Training and rehearsal activities were adapted in consequence to align dancer's needs with choreographic goals. For example, dancers' feedback about the efficacy of the strategies and desires for structure, clarification, or more review in specific areas of the work were considered and implemented within rehearsals. (Glanz, Chapter 9, p. 3). These occurrences were noted in journals, discussions and interviews and remerged in the responses gathered at the end of the process. The final performance videos were viewed several times to analyze and compare the ways in which the pre-abilities were achieved. Psychological and physiological states were noted in qualitative ways, but not measured quantitatively.

Alternating activities is recommended by sports training and Laban's notion of alternance to create recuperation (Loureiro 2013). Undulating or nonlinear periodization adapts to context and the athlete/dancer state on a given day by varying types of movement training. The hybrid nature of my work innately provided different types of movement research from minimal gesture, somatic to state-based research, choreographic phrases, dynamic jumps, and floor work. Thus, the main decision-making during these check-ins focused on the length of time to spend on certain activities, rather than searching for variations.

The accumulation of material and duration of dancing sections naturally increased in stages while this piece was being created, providing an organic progressive overload. Meeting the challenges to dancers' stamina, their abilities to integrate multiple tasks, and shifting through different types of movements and interpretive tasks also built over time.

As part of the periodization process, fostering confidence and attitude of learning was adopted. The artistic elements of the piece were broken down and practiced separately. Transitioning from one to another was then practiced, followed by cross fading, and mixing two states, building the complexity of embodying different tasks little by little. For example, improvisation phrases I named: restless baby, shaky dog, building blocks and one-thing were inserted before, during or at the end of the 'burlesque' choreographic phrase. The phrase itself embodied a bound flow and direct or spiral relationship to space and sustained relationship to music, while the other scores had variable

energies, including free flow, multidirectional spatial relationship, yielding into gravity, and musical syncopation. The ways in which these contrasting elements were mixed took place over time. We improvised broadly with the qualities and then set specific cues as to when the cross fades would happen or a motif was insert inside of a movement or phrase.

3.7.2 Assessment of Past Choreography & Training Strategies

These tables illustrate the capacities needed for my work and the functional and artistic strategies employed to cultivate them.

Capacities	Means of Training
Stamina	Light cardio, simple movement
Dexterity	Complex patterns: slow, medium & quick
Power	Plier, Squats, Lunges, Jumps
Flexibility	Functional movement in mid-range, stretches
Memory & Shifting Gears	Improvising from bank of movements & states
Endurance: aerobic, anaerobic, speed & strength	Building phrases, sections, whole piece (7 weeks)
Modulation of Interpretation	Shifting between layering states & impulses, practicing 0-100% in terms of different registers: time, amplitude, tension, emotion, use of space, interaction with space, audience, another dancer.

Table 3.3 Physical Capacities

Improvisation Structures	Types of Qualities
Following a point of contact	Space: Near
River	Flow: bound, Time: suspended
Weather Giant	Weight: dense, Time: suspended, Flow: mix of free and bound Space: mix of indirect and direct
Restless Baby	Space: multi-directional, Flow: rree
Building Blocks	Gravity: resisting/yielding, double direction
One thing	'Demeur Nomade', stabilising/extending
VCR	Playing with time, perception, memory, interrupting flow/phrasing
Shaky Dog	Time: Rapid, Space: Indirect, Flow: free, Space, Weight: light Qualities: thrashing, explosive, uneven, unpredictable
Energy Ball: Bouncing, Pinball, Waterslides	Flow: Bound, Time: Syncopated, Space: Direct Time: Rapid, Space: Indirect, Flow: free, Space, Weight: light Space: Spirals, direct or bouncing
Sand napping	Weight: released, soft, shifting
2 nd Impulse	Space: indirect, Flow: Free, explosive,
Cutting Threads	Time: Sudden/Sustained, nuanced Space: Direct/Multidirectional

Table 3.4 Qualities

3.7.3 Praxis Syllabus

This table illustrates the elements for the hybrid training Syllabus created after the assessment.

Type	Specifics	Goals
Conditioning	Pilates, Dowd, Yoga, Dance	Augment: core strength, stabilization, cardiovascular stamina & range of motion *Fitness levels down because of pandemic restrictions.
Dance sequences	Basic warm up, floor, center, and choreographed phrase	Work on use of eyes, senses, articulation of limbs, stabilization, power in jumps, movement through space, playing with relationship with gravity.
Improvisation	Imagistic, conceptual & rhythmic scores	Work on shifting attention, inspiring reactions want specificity, practice combining ideas, musicality.
Somatic	Restorative Exercises	Easily drop into state Release from stress

Table 3.5 Hybrid Training Syllabus

3.7.4 Artistic Explorations

In this short section I will discuss some of the artistic ideas inside of the images, scores and phrases proposed to the dancers. All of the philosophical justifications for my research also have artistic aspects to them. I am interested in exploring the somatic territories between the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system. Moving between and beyond states of rest and fight or flight mode. The ecological

theories of interdependence can be felt through the haptic sense and tapping into different states of awareness. The understanding I gleaned from studying the works of researchers such as Hubert Godard and Odile Rouquet through the mentoring of Nicole Harbonnier, influenced the subtlety with which I now understand movement and I was eager to share these tools and see what they generated in terms of relationship to oneself, the other and the space on micro and macro levels. Connecting to the physical intelligence that comes from being a part of the evolutionary story of life on this planet and letting these deep states of awareness infiltrate consciousness, everyday gestures and abstract movement.

Nature has been associated with femme qualities in western culture for the last millennia and both have been denigrated for the most part. I am interested in exploring what integrated rooted, female archetypes that patriarchal culture has tried so hard to repress, as well as transcending them and revealing the alienation and struggles of the 21st century through the filter of mature embodied perception. Looking to explore a full range of emotions, reflecting on the human condition with intelligent, articulate, sensuous woman who are negotiating the experiences that come with living in a patriarchal society; resisting and transcending the conditioning received from social constructs and dropping into comfort, breaking down, building up, seduction, rejection, anger, frustration, and then into more mystical states that transcend everyday experience. Undoing social conditioning rather than dissecting ourselves. Rejecting the critical voice inside that judges and sabotages us. Waking up instinct, awareness, sensitivity and using them as powerful catalysing forces. Everything I have described up until this point is also crucial from an artistic standpoint. I was looking to integrate respectful values into the work to create authentic expression, where the whole person felt safe being transparent, revelatory, and experimental in rehearsal and performance. This posture itself is an artistic statement, the performance is about the real person in the moment making choices, not just doing what they are told and wrestling to release internal or external resistance.

Many of the scores drew inspiration from elemental energy, dreams and archetypal Jungian and Tarot imagery. Certainly influenced by the global pandemic we found ourselves in, we worked with masks and blindfolds. These came to represent the duality of using something for both protecting and blocking, willful blindness versus intentional inward focus. Protective boundaries, power that comes from knowing oneself and also listening to the currents of knowledge passing through our situated reality. What does connection feel like, what is it to tap into the ancient knowledge of nature that resides in our bodies? What is it to negotiate the rage that comes from witnessing ecocide, colonisation and generational trauma caused by

sexual and class violence? How are the destructive forces and patterns exploiting the planet mirrored in the ways in which we treat ourselves and each other in everyday life? Inspired by the writings of: Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Adrienne Maree Brown, bell hooks, Vandana Shiva, Naomi Klein, and Audre Lorde to name a few, this endeavour is about rejecting the control of the mind, the instrumentation of the body and letting the two connect and speak authentically. This project seeks to reveal the strength in the vulnerability and sensitivity of our spirits, that supersede damaging societal codes.

Here are descriptions of the interior landscape or intentions behind a few of the scores:

- Using the score of *Following a point of contact*, brought awareness to subtle shifts in weight, density, connection, rest or release. Using images like grains of sand shifting or being blown by wind; of our awareness being a wanderer and our bodies the landscapes. Researching recuperation through a restorative score where, moving through sleeping positions of rest, gradually moving towards wakefulness and imagining charging one's internal batteries being recharged brought a different type of energy and quality to subsequent movements.
- Scores called *Restless baby & Shaky dog* to allow unconscious twitches and physical reaction to come out, as a way of breaking habits, and allowing the body to shake off voluntary control.
- Lisa Nelson's *Snapshots* and *VCR* scores where we apply 'effects' to move forward and back and manipulate the timing, perception and direction of other movements.
- The *Weather giant* was used to create a macro perception of the earth, imagining oneself as an ancient goddess whose feet negotiate the landscape trying not to crush life below, while arms create the weather and skull peaks out of the atmosphere towards space.
- Variations on working with imagining a *ball of energy* travelling through one's body in different ways (pin ball, basketball, water slides) generated three dimensional movements, with varying relationships to gravity and musicality and negotiating intero/exteroception.

3.8 Data Analysis

The qualitative data for this research was gathered from:

- Questionnaires: asking dancers their artistic experiences & preferences & learning styles (annex)
- Recorded documentation of discussions, rehearsals, runs of sections, final documentation (2 days), Videographers: Sonya Stefan, Stefan Verna, Clark Ferguson
- Semi structured Interviews with an 'explicitation' interview specialist (Caroline Charbonneau), week after performances: dancers & choreographer
- Choreographer Journal

Once the interviews were transcribed and reviewed, dominant themes from the three interviews were grouped together and compared with the choreographer's notes. Rehearsal footage and two filming days at the end of the process was also reviewed, analyzed, and compared with research and artistic goals. The emerging written categories were cross referenced with recorded footage and analyzed based on the elements listed above and research questions criteria including dancers reported relational experience of the process, psychological and physical states, and triangulated with the embodiment of choreographic goals articulated at the beginning of the research. The data was analyzed to see how specific strategies had functioned and conclusions were drawn as to where and how they can be applied and improved.

3.8.1 Assessment Criteria

The following table outlines the criteria I used to gage dancers physical and artistic progress and integration throughout the process and in the analysis that followed.

Personal Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- concentration- openness to feedback- integration of ideas and qualities- memory
Group Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- engagement with others- participation in discussions
Dancer's comprehension of Research Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- understanding of research & thematic concepts, somatic & conditioning practices

Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observations of sensations - confidence: sense of self & agency - connection to work - self-reflection
Artistic Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarity & quality of presence - integration of movement language - ability to modulate - awareness of environment, spatial play - ability to incarnate and transition between multiple emotional states - modulation of muscular tonicity & kinaesthetic expression - musical interpretation
Somatic Embodiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relaxed, authentic - agentic somatic signature
Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - remixing different modes of dance - ability to modulate energy, breath, movement quality & tonicity - alignment/body organization, core & spinal support - relationship to gravity, efficient muscular engagement - awareness of environment & others - coordination, dexterity, strength & power

Table 3.6 Performance Assessment Criteria

3.9 Video Documentation of Final Performance

<https://vimeo.com/650888063/622fc81026>

<https://vimeo.com/650904254/0a3ebc89db>

<https://vimeo.com/650885970>

CHAPITRE 4
RESULTS

4.1 Point of Departure

Assessment Questionnaires: Summary of dancers' preferred training practices and previous rehearsal experiences and preferences.

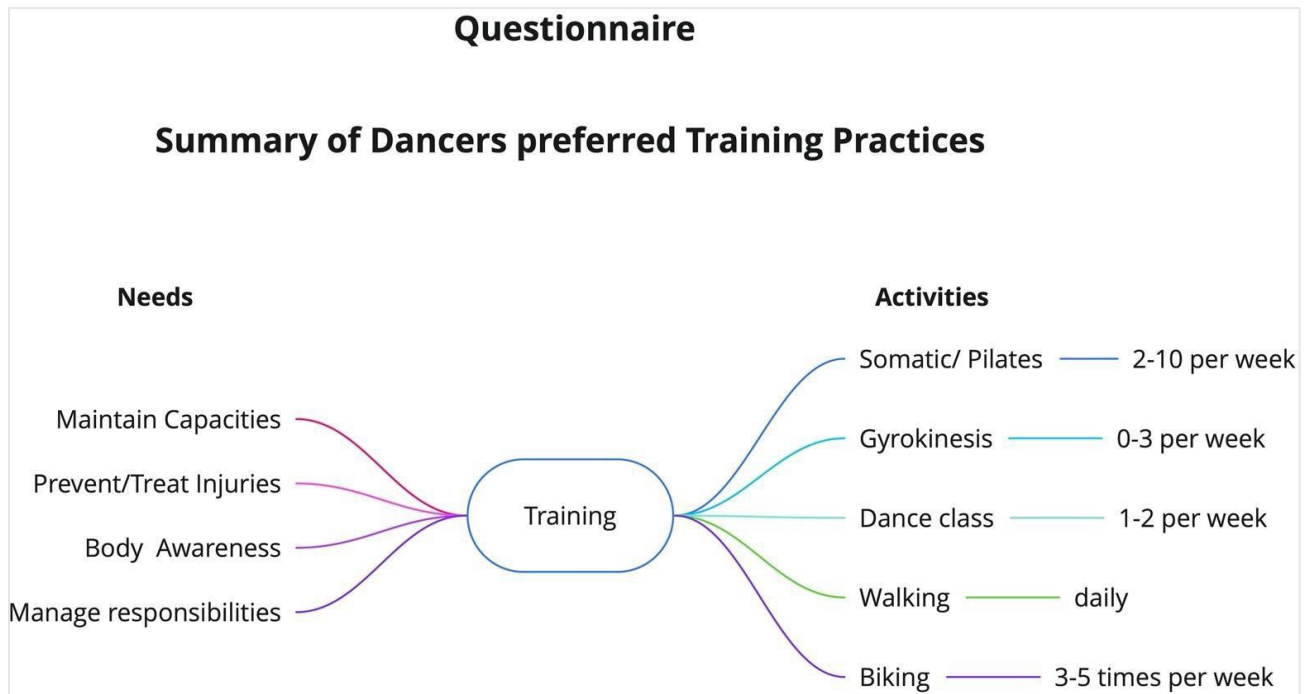


Figure 4.1 Preferred Training Practices

4.1.1 Questionnaire responses

Questionnaires were filled out in late September 2020, prior to the research process beginning.

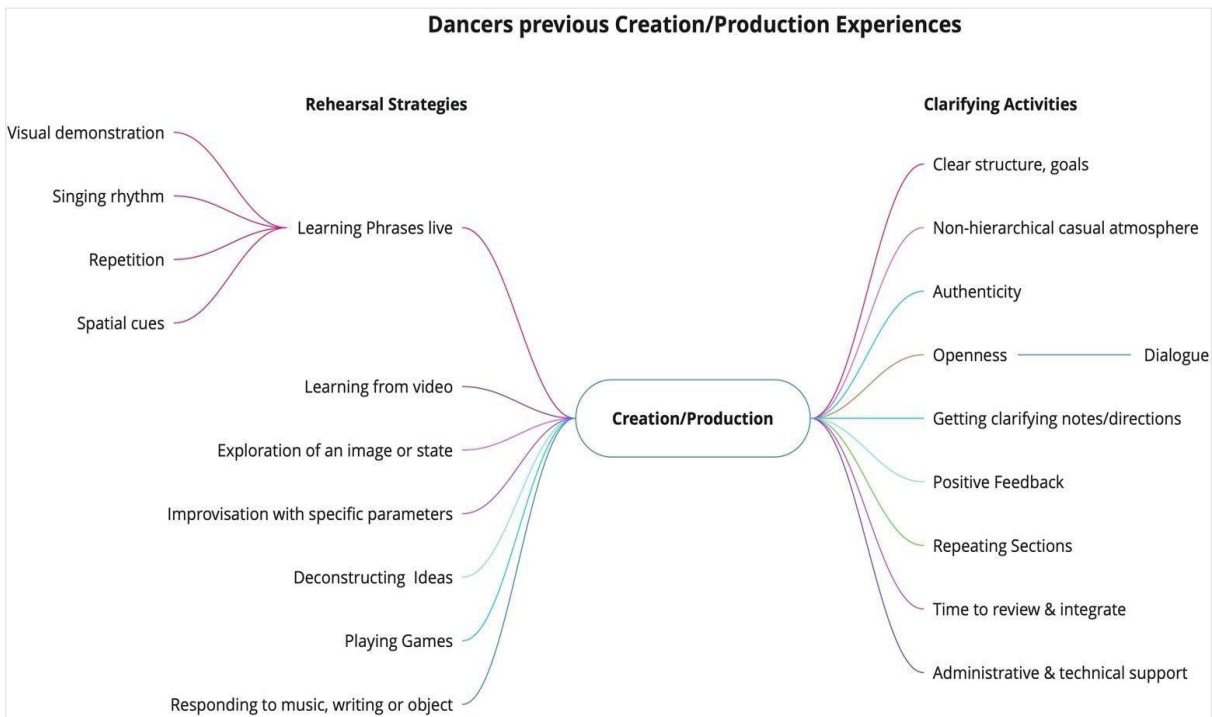


Figure 4.2 Previous Creation/Production Experiences

Dancers Mairéad Filgate and Melina Stinson are seasoned professional dancers who have graduated from conservatory training programs and worked professionally with independent choreographers and dance and theatre companies. Both are also experienced creators and teachers and selective about how they spend their time and energy to sustain many professional responsibilities. As dancers in their late 30's and early forties, their bodies store histories of decisions, touch, strain, injury, and skill. They report training to maintain and enhance their bodies' capacities, as well as to prevent and look after present and past injuries. Their current and diverse professional activities exemplify the busy professional lives of active independent dancers in Montreal and Toronto. The following is a summary of the initial survey around their preferred types of training and rehearsing activities.

Mairéad's training preference is a mix of somatic practices and more formal, structured dance classes. Her ideal training and rehearsal schedule is a few times a week, or an intensive week or 2-week period. During the pandemic shutdown to maintain professional training and personal fitness, Mairéad took 1-2 Gyrokinesis classes per week online and 0-3 contemporary dance classes per week. Cardio training varied

and included biking 3 times a week and daily walks. When possible, she also swam daily for exercise and pleasure.

Melina wants training to manage old injuries and improve body awareness in multiple ways (cardiovascular, functional mobility, strength, various qualities and dynamics and presence - performative communication). She mixes somatic, conditioning and cardio in her personal training and in classes she teaches for the public, as well as students in EDCM's professional training program.

I need the subtlety and attention to interoception from somatic, yoga, Feldenkrais or Qi Gong practices. I also feel great benefit from cardiovascular, strength and postural training from Pilates. A lot of my training decisions in recent years are based on convenience. What can most easily fit in my schedule largely determines what I actually end up doing. I find this unfortunate. I wish I could take contemporary dance classes again. Nothing really compares to taking class on a regular basis. A "dance class" is satisfying to me when it allows me to explore multiple physical states, various speeds or dynamics of movement and full range of motion. The frequency of my training activities is unfortunately very unstable, especially since the Covid pandemic. (Melina)

In terms of learning, Mairéad considers herself a visual learner. Melina describes what works best for her as "some type of work feels better if I learn how to 'sing' certain sections. Other work I find it useful to have a real visual sense of what I am doing. All of the time, I need to do it often to explore the subject with my body." (Melina). Both dancers enjoyed engaging in generative and rehearsal practices: such as learning pre-existing phrases, exploring open-ended ideas or specific parameters, deconstructing existing ideas, playing games, having conversations, getting notes/directions and repeating sections. Both had less of a preference for reconstructing set pieces or memorizing material while it is being improvised by a choreographer. Mairéad and Melina both reported having experienced fatigue and frustration learning existing phrases, reconstructing material, getting notes and directions, but not while exploring open-ended ideas, or specific parameters, deconstructing existing ideas, playing games or getting clear directions. Mairéad wrote that prior to performances she has felt tired, confident, excited, injured or in pain, unprepared, low self-esteem and ready; but never fully rested or conversely a feeling of dread. Melina has felt all the above as well as dread, rested and other emotions going into the performance.

Conditions that have affected Melina's prior performance experiences are time given before the show in the theatre, on stage, the temperature, the floor surface, costumes, rehearsal time and other side jobs, time management and remuneration. For Mairéad:

Overwork and injury are common when going into performance, especially in recent years when I am involved in creating and producing the show. Trying to fulfill too many roles can make for a frustrating experience of not being able to devote full energy to the role of performer and being too exhausted to enjoy the experience. Preparedness or unpreparedness usually falls to the choreographer and in some cases not having enough clarity or time can make for a challenging performance and low self-esteem, however the more prepared I am the more confident and excited I feel. (Mairéad)

Strategies Mairéad feels could have improved her experiences in rehearsal and performance are clarification from the choreographer around ideas and all the elements (props, costumes, music, etc.). As a choreographer, having help with administration and other tasks could have helped ease the burden of overworking. Proper warm-ups, cool downs and avoiding non-essential work can aid in not getting injured or exhausted prior to performance. Her aesthetic preferences lie somewhere between very structured and formal. She prefers casual, a more easeful pedestrian way of moving with underlying technique and strength over extreme formal technique. She also values a quality of vulnerability in performers. Mairéad's ideal personal training is a mix of somatic practices and more structured formal dance classes, a few times a week is ideal, or in an intensive 1 or 2-week period. She enjoys having time to integrate ideas fully and go deeply into work. She considers open dialogue, patience, positive feedback, and horizontality important aspects for instilling trust in a rehearsal process. Melina feels that there can always be more preparation and communication is key to instilling trust in a rehearsal process.

Communication is the most important thing in my opinion. If an open communication is established at the beginning of the process, then anything that comes up along the way can be dealt with!" Melina describes her personal aesthetic preferences as "fluctuating and that she is interested in the authenticity of relationships between performers and their bodies, between performers and the work, relationships between/among performers on stage, between the choreographer and the work and between the choreographer and the performers. "I think we are constantly changing. As a performer and dance creator, I need to know that there is openness for how I am on a daily basis, but I also need structure in the rehearsal process - a frame of what we are doing and where we are going. Then, communication can weave the way." (Melina).

4.2 Dancers' Reaction to Training Praxis

4.2.1 Warm-Up, Choreographic Phrases, Improvisation Scores

One of the most important elements of this research project was to bring preparation and training into rehearsals. This applies to the **Aesthetic**, **Generative** and **Relational** facets of the work. Here is a summary of the Benefits of Training together:

- Warmed up body and mind
- Focused attention
- Developed physical and perceptual capacities
- Aligned dancers' artistic practice with artistic goals
- Shared creative practices, created familiarity with the qualities in work
- Created a shared vocabulary
- Developed an empathetic, supportive, and energized group dynamic
- Saved dancers' time

4.2.2 Time Saved

Dancers Mairéad Filgate and Melina Stinson expressed feelings of gratitude for having a warmup included within rehearsal time and not something they had to prepare in advance. In terms of incorporating training, "I think that it is the ideal in any project and it had a very positive impact, that integration of bringing in not only physical training in terms of conditioning, strengthening, and working on technical abilities, but because there's not always time or the space to do that in our own lives, so that was really important." (Mairéad, 3:37).

In her post interview with Caroline Charbonneau, Mairéad expressed "gratitude for that space, there's something that's low pressure about it too. It's like somebody's leading, you just do what's being asked. I mean, that's the whole project, Erin's leading, but somehow with the warming up, it's relaxing." (Mairéad, 10:30).

Both dancers said that the warm-up inside of rehearsals added time to their day and served as a buffer or intermediary space to let go of previous activities from the rest of their work. "I became a bit dependent on them, so that the days that we didn't have them, I really missed it." (Melina, 14:40). Being led during the preparatory training quieted their minds, by providing a low pressure and relaxing transition that created a sense of safety in rehearsal. Both Mairéad and Melina appreciated taking time to focus in on what the work is about and reported being able to be present to go 'deeper' more quickly. I understand this not only feeling physically ready to embody movement, but also emotionally, psychologically, imaginatively, and somatically prepared. Melina described the positive impact of transitioning from the parasympathetic to the sympathetic nervous system, and how the training clarified the track we were working on.

I think the biggest thing is that I felt a sense of safety, because that time allotted took my stress level down. I didn't have to worry about making sure that if I was feeling something a bit strange that day in my body, it didn't have to worry about making sure that I get extra time. [...] I didn't have to stress about making sure I was warmed up in that way. I knew that that would be part of what we were going to do. And I think that that has a direct translation physically if I have less stress. And then also because it was Erin's movement. It was improvisation, but she also gave us her own choreography. The way we warmed up following her, I think was in line with the movement we were going to do. So, there was a direct benefit from that kind of specific preparation. (Melina, 10:40)

Time is always an important factor inside of ephemeral rehearsal periods and Mairéad shared that she initially worried that by taking time to warm up we would lose time to create,

Sometimes it can feel taking the time to warm up - sometimes you want to speed along and just get to the thing. I don't know if one is more rapid than the other, sometimes you actually don't achieve getting to the place you want to get to at all, if we don't slowly enter in. And so maybe it's more rapidly or maybe it's more deeply in general, like getting there at all. (Mairéad, 6:04)

In this preliminary phase of creation, the time taken to prepare and warm up saved time later, that might have been spent coaching or cleaning material. Instead of the preparation inefficiently taking time away from the work, she found it effectively permitted her to rapidly drop into a type of deep confident and engaged work that she might not have otherwise reached.

Yeah, on a physical level, I would just say even in a technical way, it just felt like preparedness, like really just being there... my body felt grounded, strong, in and on balance and ready to go. This of course also comes with the mental, because when I feel physically grounded and prepared, then I'm somehow at ease. I just feel ready, engaged, and confident. It's really important, because otherwise, my mind can often get busy with how I'm not prepared or how I'm not physically there or physically in the right place, and the work is not feeling right; [...] I think that having the time mentally to clear away the clutter and really focus in on what the work is about takes time. So that level of preparedness is important. (Mairead, 7:07)

Like Mairéad, Melina described a direct connection between the warmup and how deeply she was able to go into, embody an idea physically. "Whatever thing we did to warm up, I could see the direct impact that had on what we were doing creatively, how deeply I was able to go into something physically. Yeah, so the effect of that was direct on the process." (Melina, 9:30)

An unanticipated by-product of the research preparation/communication strategies was the camaraderie and bonding forged by spending time together talking and warming up. The practices connected the dramaturge, Brianna Lombardo and me to the physical work, helping to clear our minds as well. Melina said that she gathered information through everyone's body language, and we could all check in and better understand each other's state through observation in real time. She made additional observations on how the warmup helped connect and physically prepared everyone in the group, when she was asked by Caroline Charbonneau how the experience of training together impacted her experience of creating the work:

It impacted it hugely actually. We talked about this a few times in our process, how the training affected us on multiple levels, it was advantageous for the work. On one level it helped us all come together, to work together, which was both energetic and physical. I really noticed a difference, like we had one or two days where we didn't, and it was just different; it took us longer to get on the same wavelength or get physically ready. So, I think that was one big thing, to connect to each other. Also, Erin would direct it in a way that I think was preparatory for what we're going to do after that. So, I think that's it was nuanced in that sense. I think it's three levels, the gathering all together - coming together and getting on the same wavelength, and then there's physically, Erin directing us for what we're going to be doing that day. There was another thing which was just having time for me to connect with myself in the context of the rehearsal. So not just warming up physically or being ready in that way, but also for me to kind of let the day go from whatever I was doing before. Let that slide away and be able to just follow along and connect us to a deeper creative part, where I could be more available for what she was asking for. Which I think is important for me if improvisation is something that's required after. So, those are the three levels. (Melina, 6:56)

Taking the time to talk during the warmup allowed us to get to know each other, connect on multiple levels and trust each other enough to collaborate creatively. Since there was no physical contact, but rather physical distancing due to Covid restrictions, it was a way to see the others and check in with everyone's daily energetic states. Beginning this way set up an openness, watching each other move, informed her own body and laid the groundwork for kinaesthetic empathy when improvising together.

I think also the warm-up gave us time to not only connect physically, but also it because it wasn't the work that we were doing. We were able to chat kind of at the same time, which I think is also important for a creation process where we get to know each other a little bit more. I've never worked with Erin and Mairéad, I didn't know before. So, I think that also contributed to a kind of connection on multiple levels, that I think was necessary for the process that Erin was trying to do. She was interested in going more deeply into her material and that kind of time to connection was important, and I think that chatting is a big part of that. That's where we would talk about things, and she would be able to talk about stuff that she wanted to do. So, it could be specifically related to the process or not, which I think is very important...We didn't have any dancing together in contact, but even just to be able to feel Mairéad and feel Erin's bodies energetically also informed my body physically, to see them in a context where we're not working on some sort of goal that was just kind of more natural and organic. (Melina, 10:59)

To summarize, the warmup helped dancers:

- Build capacities and lower stress
- Save time and money on training
- Prepare for improvisation and choreographic tasks of the day
- Connect to themselves, the work and collectively
- Facilitate a shift in state towards a deeper creative self
- Become an important ritual and entry point to the work

4.3 Periodization

4.3.1 Effects of Modulating Schedule & Rehearsal Activity

Periodization incorporated Recuperation through modulating schedule timing and duration and interchanging activities while varying their intensity. Adapting to dancers needs inside of rehearsals by using adjusting training exercises (Bompa, Rafferty)

- Using discussion breaks, to clarify and provide respite (Halprin, Wyon)
- Varying the types of effort by alternating the type of tasks and activities (Loureiro 2013, p.16-18)
- Documenting and watching video (Wyon)
- Choreographer/dramaturg dancing to give dancers a view from an alternate perspective and experience the work themselves from the inside.

The schedule included morning and afternoon rehearsals to maximise recuperation times, two 3 week work periods with 1 week off in between. Though the modulating schedule with built in phases for different aspects of the creative process was intentional, it was not noticeably different to the dancers from many independent projects where rehearsal times vary and there are days and weeks off. Here is some of the dancers' feedback, regarding the modulation of the schedule and the activities within rehearsals. Melina:

It wasn't very much different from any schedule that I have, so I couldn't really speak to the effects of that kind of spacing, the recuperation within a week of working like one day on, one day off. Her openness to working at whatever place we were at that day, I think that recuperation, I felt more. It was nice that it was spaced out a little bit over the month and half that we were working for. I couldn't really feel the difference between that kind of spacing because other things are happening in our lives. But within a week, not working five days, but working three or four days was agreeable. That was positive because it was sustainable. I think that we could have even worked a bit harder sometimes. That could have its challenges sometimes, because depending on where we took a break, seems like there is a certain momentum that could get lost, but that wasn't all the time either. Erin was very open to the flow of each rehearsal, progressing in relationship to what we needed that day and what she needed that day. So, it's hard to say if something lacked flow or not because maybe it was just responding to what we needed, without a stable control group for reference. I think that with most of the time though it was great to have a warm-up and then get into things, and to have time to let things digest - not overworking. Sometimes it could kind of lack a little bit of momentum, but that just happened a few times in my memory of it. (Melina, 20:20)

Rehearsals did not feel overly demanding, and dancers didn't feel exhausted or injured, as is often the case. Time to recover within rehearsals was positive, but sometimes came with a loss of momentum. Dancers couldn't speak to the effects of spacing out blocks of rehearsal periods because it didn't feel that unusual and there were other things happening in their lives.

It's difficult to necessarily achieve because there is a certain recuperation from the work that we're doing, but then everybody goes off and does varying degrees of other work. So, I don't feel like it was an extreme where we were pushing so hard and then like stop everything and really have a rest and then go back. We were working hard, but somehow it had a sort of recuperation within it. So, I didn't feel like 'Oh my God I needed a physical rest' so much, and again when we went away and did different amounts of things. I think it's positive, but it didn't feel like a sort of extreme version of that. (Mairéad, 23:26)

To the dancers', incorporating *recuperation* was seen as a good idea, but logistically challenging to apply because of other things happening in their lives. 'Time off' was filled with other activities, so there was a type of recuperation from my work, but not rest per se. Integrating recuperation inside of rehearsals meant they didn't feel overworked or in need of a big physical rest but did enjoy the mental recuperation brought on by a change of schedule and appreciated having days off during the week to accomplish other work.

Again, the mental break and just schedule break is always good. Or I like that anyway. I mean, now I'm just so used to that in my life, I like change. So don't doing anything for a long period of time. I just enjoy having little respite you know. Just change up the schedule. Get other things done, it just frees up space. So I think it's more mental for me, maybe than physical in this case. I mean, if we were working in an ideal world, I'm sure she would have wanted to work like five days a week, longer days, and then you know, then maybe it would have felt a little bit more like we needed that physically, but I didn't feel necessarily like I physically needed it. But mentally, it's always welcome. (Mairéad, 23:26)

In my experience of teaching, directing, and dancing with students and professionals with a heavier schedule, ex. longer hours, five days a week, is that people become less generous in their work, moodier, passive aggressive and visibly fatigued as well as sometimes sick and injured. In sport & performance research, these tell-tale signs of overexertion are labeled 'staleness' in terms of quality of work, and these factors often create tension in terms of working relationships in my professional experience. "There's a fatigue that can sometimes set in, or like these challenges that we talked about you know that can start to become irritants or something." (Mairéad, 21:46). These tensions barely arose in this process and the interpreters dancing was always engaging from my perspective, rich in somatic nuances, focus and technical prowess.

4.3.2 Momentum - Training Progression & Surplus

This brings us to a one of the challenges of applying the notion of periodization from a sport context into the conditions of independent dance creation/production. Three main themes emerged:

- I. The challenge of creating training that built a surplus of strength and stamina over time even though the goals of the work are less clear than in a defined sport.
- II. The need for repetition to support memory while the body rested between work periods, especially in the *Tapering* period prior to performance, which runs completely counter the normal production schedule in dance.
- III. The need for economic support to truly apply the notions of rest/recuperation, cross training, and holistic support.

Incorporating training saved overscheduled/worked dancers time by paying them to train and rehearse within consolidated hours, where preparation and training for rehearsals wasn't on their own time. Shorter hours dancing allowed more time for recuperation. Some areas of improvements for the warmup were suggested by the dancers to align it more closely with the goals of the work and the progression of activities necessary for achieving it. This improved the warmups by incorporating the dancers' needs alongside the prepared Syllabus.

Maybe a few times, it wasn't exactly what I needed to do for my body that day, but because it also allowed us to connect with each other and do all these other things, I think the benefits outweighed any sort of challenges that were present that day. (Melina, 14:40)

To address this, dancers could be asked more specific questions about their desires and also asked to contribute exercises or practices to the warmup. The adaption to their reported state (daily check in) and the inclusion of rest inside of rehearsals could have been better balanced with the more long-term goals of increasing intensity progressively and building toward a surplus.

I think that the actual training part could have either been a bit more demanding... I felt like, in the fluidity of responding to our needs each day, the long-term needs of the show, of the performing, was maybe sacrificed a little bit. So those two training goals could have been a bit more balanced. In the daily recuperation and within the recuperation of each rehearsal, the greater goal of going towards the show became less important, I think. Which is hard to manage. those two goals become more balanced would be where I would focus. (Melina)

This is also a matter of perception as the demands on the dancers did increase over time. Since training and rehearsing were progressive and not as exhausting as usual, dancers were less aware of their increased stamina and workload. The length of the warmup was shortened when dancing sections became longer which could also have added to an impression of ease. Finally, the presence of cool down and/or discussion at the end of rehearsals also had recuperative effects and could have contributed to not feeling the familiar fatigue associated with the end of a rehearsal day. Explicitly pointing out or charting the improvements and increases over time could potentially make dancers more aware of their own progress and evolution of their capacities in relation to the work.

The culture of surpassing the limits of what feels good is deeply entrenched in dancers training and professional modus operandi. Achieving high standards is the goal of all the artists involved in the work, but in my experience the expectation is that it falls to the choreographers and rehearsal directors to drive this effort. The incorporation of recuperation and adaptation to dancers' needs inside of rehearsals was appreciated in some ways, but diverging from the practice of over exertion and the lack of ensuing exhaustion gave dancers the sense of not having pushed themselves or been driven hard enough. Dancers don't have the opportunity to externally witness their own work, and they seem to easily dismiss it without the causal measure that fatigue provides. As the choreographer, I had the impression throughout this process that generous richly embodied work was happening. As an experienced teacher I also recognise that ideas and choreography take time to sink in and rather than 'pushing' and often left space for this absorption and witnessed it happen over time. My subjective opinion during rehearsals and in rewatching footage from the beginning to the end of the process is that the material was integrated over time in ways that worked towards my choreographic goals. It's also worth noting that there were no serious injuries during the process or filming. This opinion was also supported by feedback from dramaturge Brianna Lombardo and videographer Sonya Stefan and the dancers themselves when they watched the video documentation. (See Video Documentation in Annex)

4.3.3 Reality for Choreographer

As a choreographer, this modulating schedule with the break between phases provided me with some much-needed time for my own physical movement research to feed into the choreography, to gain some distance, to watch videos and make compositional choices in terms of order of the material, and time for

the many administrative tasks associated with this project and my other work. It would have been useful to use some of this time for personal rest and recuperation, however this space away from the group was helpful in addressing other aspects of the project and supporting the work in rehearsal. This aspect will be elaborated on in the Discussion chapter.

Overall Breaks between phases helped both dancers, dramaturge and choreographer:

- to have space away from irritants and recuperate from mental fatigue
- have time to digest material generated
- to distill what's important in the work, 'what sticks'
- time to do other things important to their survival and well-being
- Reset - come back with gratitude/appreciation for the project

4.3.4 Dancers' Financial Realities

Then there is this other greater question of the problem that recuperation creates in terms of days off - the non-rehearsing days, the dancer context, kind of nulls that. I have no solution apart from the minimum guaranteed income. (Melina, 59:20)

Complete rest is not financially feasible for independent dance artists. If schedules and payments are reduced, dancers will fill their time off with other work. Periodization was designed and has been applied in settings that are either state funded, for sponsored amateur athletes or for professional male athletes. Professional female athletes and dancers, although sharing similar schedules and demands, are not privy to the same financial and holistic support in areas like nutrition, trainers, coaches, psychological support, physiotherapy, etc. (The Guardian, 2018). Even dancers working for well-funded companies rarely receive the same type of personalised, modulating training with paid rest, designed for optimal performance. Australian ballet and a few training institutions in England have applied versions of periodization (Wyon 2014), but it is by no means present in independent dance projects.

Which also COVID subsidies have sort of helped...I just had the CERB for two months this summer, but that was really answered all these problems. Yes, I think this context is important, it plays an important part in this question of recovery and then training. I know that Erin borrowed some ideas from the sports world, but in a professional sports setting, it's not all sports, but still, if we talk about sports with men especially, who are paid for what they do, is ideal because it's still the only thing they do. So that the recovery is the real recovery. (Melina, 42:00)

This research process benefitted from a temporary anomaly of Emergency Covid Relief from the federal government, that allowed us the positive experience of working in an idyllic situation similar to a base universal income, such as “France's special unemployment system for performing artists and technicians, known as Intermittence de Spectacle” (Beardlesy & Watts, 2021) that some professional dancers in France enjoy. The release from the external pressure of covering the cost of living eased the usual situation of overworking linked to insufficient recovery time. This was especially true in the situation of applying Tapering, where there is a reduction of exertion prior to performance to optimise performance.

The idea of recuperation is great, but it's not realistic in the context of working a small amount of hours, like financially it doesn't make sense, unless you're a pro athlete who's in a context where like everything is about them winning the gold medal and there is a sustainable living. The logistics of living are going to be different. They can take time off, but I can't really take the time off, because I'm not paid for that time. So, I need to work in other ways. So that time gets filled up anyway with something else that's not contributing to that final show. I think that's the big problem in this. Like it's a good idea and I think that it would work, but there's a huge logistical problem in terms of the realities of life - unfortunately. Which was why the warm-ups were so great because that answered two problems. All the benefits gained from it, and it answered the problem of the dancer who has lots of other jobs. Who has no time to train which is a problematic reality today. So, this preparation inside the rehearsal responded well to that. And it was a relief on this level too. Like okay, I know this is part of what I'm being paid to do, and I don't want to bring it back to that, but it's also an important part of that whole thing. I think that that's the Baie-mole with this idea of recuperation of days off, because I have to do something else in my day. Whereas the preparation inside the rehearsal answered that. So, if we had maybe had that other day of rehearsal, (during Tapering the final week) but also you are being paid an honorarium (for the reduced schedule) it would be a different situation. (Melina, 40:22)

What emerges from this comment by Melina, is the effect of the reduced schedule during the week of the taping. Although it eased physical effort, takes away a day of work. In the context of independent dance, the application of Tapering not only creates financial pressure, but it also increases the challenge of recalling choreographed material under the increased pressure of a performance like situation – although in this instance due to pandemic restrictions they were recordings with limited observers.

4.4 Tapering

Taper refers to a progressive reduction in training load prior to athletic competition aiming to reduce fatigue while maintaining/enhancing training adaptations. This reduction in fatigue and maintenance/enhancement of training adaptations has a substantial impact on athletic performance. (Stone, Knight, Hall, Shearer, Nicolas, Shearer, 2023)

The concept *Tapering* borrowed from sport diminishes exertion and rehearsal hours, after a progressive build, and prior to a goal, to create a surplus of energy in performance. The ways that Tapering was applied in this research process was to reduce the number of rehearsals a week from 4 to 2 in between filming on a Saturday and the following Friday. One daytime rehearsal was also switched to an evening to emulate a typical technical/dress rehearsal performance schedule.

Specifically, though in between the two filming days we just did two short rehearsals, so we didn't really push a lot. One was at night, the night before also. I mean, we did start doing things and it was kind of hard to do things late at night... I didn't feel like we were pushing beyond, like really ramping up and exhausting ourselves beforehand, as is often the case. I know that she was making that effort to peter (taper) it down before and it did feel like that. (Mairéad)

Rehearsals included video watching, notes and discussion around the first filming day, alternating with running longer sections, and doing fewer explorations of shorter sections. Both dancers noticed the reduction of rehearsals or the absence of the normal ramping up prior to the taping and found the shift in the schedule routine from day tonight less optimal and somewhat destabilising. "But at the physical level of preparation, yes I was ready and rested to do it, but I needed to be more physically ready." (Melina, 45:22).

We had a few days off before Saturday when we recorded. And then our schedule changed that last week. We had one less rehearsal, I think, that's true we had less. It was different than how it normally is - just like rehearsing and rehearsing and then a show. It was good and not good. I feel two ways about it because in one respect, it was nice to have time away from the material and come back to it fresh in a sense. But in another way, because as we hadn't run material, I didn't feel quite ready. I didn't feel like it was in my body. Yeah, it wasn't ready in my body. It was kind of like I had to go and get it that day of filming. But I think that's also because our schedule had changed, we had one less day. Yeah. I feel like somewhere in the middle would have been maybe more ideal, but that's hard. I think that it felt good to have time to rest before for sure, but then at the same time, I didn't feel quite ready in my body. (Melina, 37:00).

As previously mentioned, both dancers observed that they could have been pushed harder before filming and reported not feeling completely ready for what was asked of them on performance (video recordings) days; when the sections were strung together, and they were asked to repeat them a few times. Perhaps implying that the crucial step of pushing towards building a surplus of strength and stamina, had not been attained.

4.4.1 Body Memory & Performance Pressure

Body memory is essential for dancers going into performance and *Tapering* caused them to feel not totally mentally ready the day of the filming in this respect. It was challenging to retain and recall detailed information in sections that had been more defined but then were left, “I appreciated the rest, but it was maybe not enough review.” (Melina, 51:24). Modulating and tapering rehearsal schedules have the paradoxical effect of enabling integration of broad concepts, allowing the body to recuperate from the material, while creating challenges for memory - some details and a certain momentum were lost during the rest periods.

Having rest days maybe intensifies this challenge, because of the recovery, the material is digested in a different way than when we see it every day in more intensive processes. It requires an ability to mentally go and find something, especially parts that were more defined in time and space. That's an interesting part of this idea of breaking it up. We saw stuff in July and then we got back together in October. Saw more stuff, pulled certain parts out of that, then had a break and then came back. So this whole time things are sinking deeper, but other details are being lost. Which happens in all processes for sure, but I think that there's something specific about this (Periodization) structure that is interesting. (Melina, 50:17)

Body memory came up when the dancers had to ‘perform’ for a recording. The increased pressure and higher stakes of eventually being seen by a public, was accompanied by the dancers’ desire to physically deeply memorise the work to free their attention while performing. The repetition required for this level of integration ran counter to the repetition I had been striving to avoid because of its links to overuse injuries. Balancing the need to create movement patterns, while avoiding repetitive stress injuries is clearly a challenging aspect of preparing dancer for the stage. In this short project everyone’s bodies stayed healthy, at least partly due to the lack of excessive repetition, but the desire for solidification from the dancers came out in the comments and interviews, (echoing in some of the ways remarks made by dancers in Bienaise’s memoir which analysed the role of presence for interpreters in an early version of my piece, *The Shallow End*. This subject will also be explored in the Discussion portion.

4.5 Transitioning from Ideation to Interpretation

Body memory came up when the dancers had to ‘perform’ for a recording. The increased pressure and higher stakes of eventually being seen by a public, was accompanied by the dancers’ desire to physically deeply memorise the work to free their attention while performing. The repetition required for this level

of integration ran counter to the repetition I had been striving to avoid because of its links to overuse injuries. Balancing the need to create movement patterns, while avoiding repetitive stress injuries is clearly a challenging aspect of preparing dancer for the stage. In this short project everyone's bodies stayed healthy, at least partly due to the lack of excessive repetition, but the desire for solidification from the dancers came out in the comments and interviews, (echoing in some of the ways remarks made by dancers in Bienaise's memoir which analysed the role of presence for interpreters in an early version of my piece, *The Shallow End*. This subject will also be explored in the Discussion chapter. They are:

- Incorporating more repetition of phrases in the warmup and practicing/familiarizing dancers with dynamic cues while improvising.
- Increasing marking when a rest is needed (Kirsh 2014)
- Running sections together so that stamina is adequately prepared for on filming/performance days when sections were put together and repeated.
- Continuing to use video to create objectivity, respite and common ground, and discussions to check in, create self and group awareness and clarify goals.
- Paid rest periods.
- Personalized training routines that created a surplus of strength and stamina.

To refine the Tapering, it would be useful to:

- Make sure there is a period of refinement later in the process, solidify choices prior to performance
- Make the improvisational aspects of the work explicitly clear and give dancers a veto, agency to choose to stop or limit what they do.
- Incorporate practices such as marking & visualisation to reinforce memory.
- Have longer period in the performance space with the same schedule (such as a week or at least a few days), for their bodies to have time to acclimatise and adjust to schedule shift, such as technical residency the week prior, much like previews in theatre.
- Pay dancers for a full week or an additional honorarium to allow them to take recuperation time to actually recover and rest.

4.6 Communication: Effects of Discussion - Culture Shift & Connection

Within dance rehearsal, talking can be seen as time taken from the productivity of movement-based activities. While dialogue is often a part of rehearsals, the dancers noted that the opportunity to be honest about their emotional and physical states and experiences was something of a culture shift from other processes. Time was allotted to checking in at the beginning and as needed during rehearsals, and group discussions were used in a variety of ways and were “another really great part of this process. That time was built in, there was a casualness about it which was nice because it allows for the space when questions come up, if we need to talk, you just talk. It's not we don't have time for that. It felt like okay, let's take the time where we need it, when we need it.” (Mairéad, 13:25)

Since the research work was centered around the dancers' experience & promoting their wellbeing, time devoted to communication gave them permission to speak honestly. The dancers and I found that acknowledging our feelings and challenges led to a transparency that allowed us to empathise with each other. “It wasn't just me being aware of my own state, but it was also me being aware of how Erin and Mairéad were living the process. Which then makes the communication in the creation process more efficient and open. That was only positive.” (Mélina, 21:30). They both found it a relief to not pretend to be perfect or have to ignore less than optimal states, masking their feelings/sensations to appear ‘agreeable or eager’ for the choreographer. Both dancers noted that feeling safe to share their physical pain, fatigue, injuries and other mental and emotional states reduced stress and saved them from the internal pressure of using energy to perform wellness. Instead verbally acknowledging and revealing their physical vulnerabilities in this process, allowed them to connect to their phenomenological reality, which facilitated the process by dissipating the usual background noise of disassociating from their physical state; addressing the ‘functional effacement’ effect of dancers ignoring signals from their bodies, highlighted in an earlier chapter that Dance Science research shows contributes to over working and can often lead to injuries (Wyon, Rafferty). It gave me as a choreographer a clearer picture of the reality of the dancers' experience and created an agency for them to adapt their work without the fear of being replaced. The fact that this was a research creation rather than production alleviated some pressure and influenced this impact, but nonetheless the relief it created in the dancers themselves is notable.

Through the process we were observing ourselves. I think this is really positive. Melina said it one day in rehearsal, I think we were talking about injuries and past injuries, Erin was asking about them. And Melina expressed that it was such a relief just to have a space to acknowledge it. You can be going through something emotionally and you just tell it to your friend and somehow it just feels better to say it, it's sort of like that. That Erin made the space, just even the focus on our well-being and health, and having the space to talk about it somehow you sigh a breath of relief because you don't have to hold it in. And there's nothing necessarily that different practically speaking, you know. Well, there were different things, of course like the training and other things, but even just that that element of it, just being alive in the space, and given room to talk about, or be with it, felt really positive. It allowed some stress to be let go of. You don't have to hold yourself up, and always feel like you need to be physically and mentally perfect or something, of course there's ups and downs and that's acknowledged. (Mairéad, 26:16)

The space and permission to talk when needed also created a productive casualness and flexible discussions that creative connections emerged from. Not only did chatting connect us, but the dancers reported that it helped to have the choreographer share intentions and ideas verbally, creating an opportunity for them and the dramaturge, Brianna Lombardo to collaborate by adding to these ideas both in words, movement and interpretive choices.

The group discussion was super productive, also because where we were all at with the COVID pandemic. I feel like it plays a part of it because we were also in different places. Coming together and making this piece felt special at this time. We were like 'this is so great that this is a project that's happening, that it hasn't been canceled'. And then within that context, we were touching the situation. Whereas sometimes, I feel like we make art, and we are say 'art is about life', but we're still in this little bubble and other life is very far away. Whereas this time it felt like in the context, I felt like it was important to talk about everything outside. So our group discussions were important in that sense, because it allowed us to work with a permeable boundary - of what we were doing and everything else that's happening. (Melina, 29:40)

Melina found the daily physical and psychological check-in allowed her to express and become aware of not only her state but everyone else's as well. For her the group discussions were productive, especially during the lockdown phase of COVID, where she appreciated the opportunity to be a part of an art project that was interacting with and helping daily life and the positive impact of expressing herself and knowing how the others around her were experiencing the process and managing the pandemic realities.

I knew what kind of state they were in because we were able to have this open dialogue about where we were at and what was going on. Yeah, that was huge because then I know, she's feeling this right now. And that part of it was nice, because then it didn't feel like a big thing, because this was what Erin was interested in. We had permission to give space to talk about

that stuff and then that takes the stress level down from performing physically. I was feeling pretty good the whole process, but if for example, one time I know Mairéad had a little something going on with her, and so she was able to express that. And then we were able to adapt our work, what we were doing to that, which I think does take the physical stress level down, which makes it easier to dance. It's just better. That's unusual that there's so much real space for it. That because it was what Erin was interested in looking at, we spent time talking about where we were at and it didn't feel inefficient. Whereas if in other processes that I've been in, if there is space for that kind of thing, it's still feels a bit stressful because it feels like it's taking away from the point, the productivity. There's still a kind of stress or pressure to stay on task, whatever that task is. (Mélina, 23:00)

Melina reported that the approach of this project validated both her intellectual response to the theoretical and artistic research, as well as her experience of embodying it; appreciating the inclusion in an artistic community especially in the context of the isolation of the lockdown and other projects and work being cancelled.

It was really nice because as a dancer I always feel a little bit outside of everything else...I feel kind of disconnected or 'dans les marges'? And maybe everyone has that feeling, I don't know. And that's also because I distance myself as well. I never felt totally comfortable really interacting, for lots of reasons. So when we had these discussions, I felt heard and it made me feel good because, I felt a kind of inclusion of my experience that was validating. So that was really nice. Maybe that too is part of this year, this time, the situation that breaks down the barriers a little bit, the ego a little bit. I do not know, but I loved our discussions. It was great. (Melina, 31:00)

Contrastingly, Mairéad, who is both a dancer and choreographer, felt slightly nervous or impatient when too much time was spent on long discussions. She reported having a desire to get to work. Simultaneously she found our conversations to be useful times to rest and absorb and that debriefing had a positive influence on the dance work, but qualified that time for group discussions shouldn't be at the expense of proper time for other things.

I feel like they were productive. I mean, there is always this possibility of veering off from work too far... I enjoy the casual nature, it's a bit more relaxing and doesn't feel stilted or rigid. It's like okay we can go different places, but then sometimes there's a point when it goes a little long. It's just a danger, I always enjoyed those discussions.

...I think ultimately it is important to keep that openness and it's productive because if you don't allow that space, you don't know what will come out, because creative things also come out right? There were times I felt like we talked for quite a long time, and maybe if it was my project, I might feel apprehensive or anxious that I wasn't getting to the work. However, other things

kind of emerged from that, that influenced what happened next. And sometimes really beautiful things came out of that, creatively.

So maybe those anxieties in me when it veers away, are me reflecting on if it was me in the other position, but I really respect the space given, because there's a tendency in me to get maybe a tiny bit impatient is too strong, but feel nervous, that it's too much time... More as a choreographer, I would feel that influences me. I mean, it's always kind of a relief to let things go where they go and not have somebody like okay now next, to have that peer relationship. Of course, we're in different roles, but the flow is feeling natural. Maybe it's more as the final thing comes that I want to work...It's just like a tiny bit of anxiety, I worry about not having proper time for other things, because I'm not in the moment feeling impatient, "Like can we stop doing this?" I am engaged. As a dancer especially it can be a relief to just have the time to absorb and rest physically and talk through things. (Mairéad, 33:22)

As we got closer to final weeks, Mairéad wanted to work on finalizing the product, and work usually means dancing, not talking. This speaks to dancers being accustomed to running choreography like drills for the memory and performance. It is a strong, ingrained habit that has the purpose of building confidence from body memory. After years of working in this way, it is a pattern that is destabilizing to alter. The dancers' answers point to the value of establishing trust, complicity and exchange of ideas early on, as mentioned by Jackie Smart in her article "The Feeling of Devising" (2014). The question of how to integrate this discussion time and space inside of a process as it approaches the deadline pressure highlights the different phases of creation and production and the importance of time management, suggests a paradigm shift related to the value of verbal exchanges as productive work. In the future I would experiment with finding a mechanism to illustrate how they conserve & generate energy, and actively contribute to the realisation of the work – such as a diagram of battery filling while it is being charged like we have on our phones could facilitate this. Melina addressed the question in this comment:

It depends on the situation. So yes, if it's more of a stressful situation where the people involved are more worried about making sure things are done, then it's more stressful. Obviously it really depends on the project t. I don't know how you would create this kind of feeling of low stress and real, genuine openness to adapting, if there wasn't the fact that Erin was interested in researching this thing. But maybe it would be possible if we accept that this is absolutely an efficient, interesting and valuable part of working. If it's made explicit, maybe than it would have the same effect? (Méline, 24:00)

Most of the rehearsals were very positive, free of tension and conflict. However not everything went perfectly smoothly, and communication was also used to air out and redirect differences. The most notable challenge occurred the first day of filming during a loosely structured section where the

dancers moved between improvisation, set material and spatial shifts. They didn't hear a musical cue to move on to a new part because the speakers in the studio were blown out and the musical change wasn't very audible. Sonya Stefan was documenting this run and it was going very well. From the outside, I wasn't sure if they were intentionally delaying, and allowed the section to go longer because the performers seemed very engaged. I didn't want to interrupt and was curious to see what would happen. This added approx.. 5 minutes and meant that Mairéad was very tired by the time she performed her final solo. This event understandably destabilised her.

I felt thrown off and I expressed that a little bit, but we didn't really talk about it and we talked about it later. I'm trying to think now. We talked about it, it was remarked upon and then I think Erin called me and asked me how I felt about the filming, how things were going and stuff like that. So, it was in between, but we really discussed it on the phone and then we had a rehearsal before the next day of filming, so we talked a little bit more about it. (Mairéad, 47:06)

As other parts of the process have revealed ingrained desires in the dancers for repetition and exertion, this incident revealed a deep desire in me as a choreographer, to prioritise the piece over the dancers' energy expenditure. There are implicit agreements when you ask someone to improvise in performance and if the parameters change, they need the agency from inside the work to assert their limits. But since this is an extremely hard thing to do when you are giving your all as a performer, it is the responsibility of those on the outside to hold to the agreed upon series of events. Or contingency plans, like a safe word if things have gone too far. A from the anchored in the perspective that the performer's well-being is the priority and supersedes 'the show'. As much as this was my intention going into this project, at that moment I prioritised the filming of the piece and did not check with the dancers. Deep habits are hard to break and new patterns take time to establish.

The very fact that this was a research project affected our interactions and experiences. The dancers had the opportunity to reflect and articulate what they learned during and after the project. I benefited from their input during the creation and continue to learn from them. The dancers also delved into reflecting on the theoretical questions I was asking, as well as the artistic and this type of shared research was invaluable after years of reflecting on my own. Due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we avoided external production pressure from presenters, technical collaborators, multiple other work engagements and audiences/performances. Interested in putting the strategies that will be named here to the test in the next phase of the process, gearing up to performances. The physical impacts from adding discussions to rehearsals were

- Kinaesthetic empathy with team
- Authentic awareness of Body Schema - physical sensations
- Dialogue and shifts with Body Image and self-image through discussions and watching video documentation
- Reflexive awareness of mind body states

It was a vulnerable act for the dancers to share their experience and I thank them for their transparency and Caroline Charbonneau for contextualising the benefits of their input in my research.

C - Erin is so curious to dig deep into all the entanglement on how the process unfolds with dancers, so those are precious gems of information for her to compare with what she experienced and what she felt in the studio regarding and having feedback afterwards. You know the time between finishing the process and speaking about things can be different than the experience in the studio - it can be super precious to know.

M - That's true. Okay, good. But you know what I mean? It's a bit sensitive, because we're all so exposed in those situations, and I am cognizant of that. (Mairéad, 21:07)

For Melina, the open ended/experimental aspect of the project allowed dancers' experiences to be validated. Their voices in discussions, recordings, and interviews, allowed them to hear themselves (body schema) and be heard by the dramaturg and myself. The final interviews themselves were beneficial for each of us to process our learning and time together. I benefited immensely from the dancers' feedback and insights, and this research informs my teaching and the direction of subsequent choreographic projects.

4.7 Documentation/Performance

The days devoted to documenting our choreographic researched significantly advanced the process. The artistic contributions, and talent of videographers: Sonya Stefan, Clark Ferguson and Stefan Verna infused our dancing with much needed performance energy. Sonya Stefan brought an overhead camera, in addition to her dancers' eye to the filming. The moving camera work of Clark Ferguson and Stefan Verna added depth, dynamism and a cinematic perspective, while outside eyes, Brianna Lombardo and Helen Simoneau supported us with their insights and positivity. Each filming day was an artistically enjoyable experiences on to itself, where the changing camera angles and point of views expanded the dancers' and my perception and performance of the work. Our interpretations were likely more open ended and improvisational than if they had been in front of an audience with full lights and music. The filming was the closest thing we experienced to a performance at the time of extreme pandemic restrictions.

It was wonderful to bring different people into the process, because we couldn't perform publicly. Somehow that gave it a newness and freshness, even though those people were working on it. It was this new energy that we were somehow like performing for and with them. And it injected that sort of spirit of just a different energy, change, so that was exciting. And then they were great people that we were working with, so that was really positive. It was quite relaxed in terms of other filming that I've done. We didn't do too many pull apart things from different angles, we were able to, for the most part just perform the thing. (Mairéad, 38:20)

The dancers had different attitudes going into the filming days and somewhat different reactions to them. Melina wrote that: The preparation leading up to the shows for this project: sense of working together, preparing together and warming up together before the shows - This made me feel physically ready for the show and also ready artistically. I felt connected to my colleagues and more ready to create together and share the space in performance. There was a sense of being able to have space to be where we were at that day and continue through the project from there. This was a lovely feeling and contributed to a sense of "groundedness". Melina also found the video recordings enjoyable and appropriate to point in the process we were at but would have found a full show after just six weeks.

This aspect connected to my past experience. I am super comfortable in these situations now because I've done it a lot. I really enjoy performing for video because there's also less pressure, because you can do it again if something messes up. And I think we were at a good place in our material to do that. I would've been far less comfortable doing a full show, stringing things together, just because of where we were at. Like we hadn't done everything together, we were still making little decisions before. So, I think it was a really good thing that we did it in the context of video. It was also fun the way it wasn't just a static video shoot. The videographers were moving, so that also felt like a different element to play with performatively. (Melina, 35:58)

She enjoyed that the cameras weren't static and had fun shifting her interpretation to focus on interacting playfully with the camera.

Artistically and otherwise, it was great. With filming too, we did little things, then we improvised a little thing, then finally it just meant that we filmed a bit. I felt that it was really something, a part of the creation that was apart and unique, but that we lived two times, with two different video teams. We decided to put the camera on the very top and have a top view and then stuff changed. Which is really cool, and I love that! It brings another performative aspect, which we don't have on stage when things are set. Improvisation in that context is more reduced, or it is found elsewhere in the material. While with the video we have created different contexts, the whole framework is more mobile which is nice. (Melina, 44:36)

4.8 Summary

Dancer responses to research strategies, and recommendations for future phases & applications of Artistic Periodization. What was learned, gained and missed during this process?

1. Training

- A. Continue training as a group inside of rehearsals, monitor and balance time spent training with other activities.
- B. Adapt training to the shifting needs of the dancers in relationship to the work as it emerges.
- C. Develop the unique relationship between the training and choreographic facets of the choreographer's movement.
- D. Keep asking dancers what they need and allow them to contribute warm up and creation ideas.
- E. Create an environment where it is safe for dancers to share their thoughts, experience and stop or adapt the work if necessary.
- F. Include more review of set material for memory: body & mind, using visualisation, marking and full exertion.
- G. Practice transitions of attention, shifting awareness from internal and external focus when moving between improvisation and set material.
- H. Practice modulating and adapting relationship to time, environment, music, others, audiences.
- I. Give dancers conditioning routines tailored to their needs, with recommendations for specific training plans/schedules they can do on their own to dancer's entire schedule and incorporating time for recuperation.

2. Periodization - *Modulated Schedule & Rehearsal Activities*

- A. Make individual and group training program progressively more demanding, building towards performance goals.
- B. Balance adapting day to day with long term goals. Be pragmatic when planning and running rehearsals about what can be accomplished.
- C. Address the financial reality and find funding that allows dancers to rest on days off.
- D. Keep time allotted to discussions balanced with time for physical activity, monitor and adapt as needed. Plan for the challenge of keeping time and investing creatively in ideas (challenge of zooming in and out, someone in a timekeeping role or set a timer).
- E. Keep all elements: warm-up, improvisations, discussions, but keep the focus and the time management clear cut.
- F. The other sections will be dealt with in more detail in the Discussion Chapter.

4.9 Conclusion

I adapted the notion of periodization to an artistic context as a method for managing time, including recuperation and training dancers and myself. to be capable of achieving artistic goals, while side stepping pitfalls I've experienced in the past. Using a modulating schedule of somewhat reduced hours to leave more space for dancers' daily activities and time to rest. Besides the preparation, these dance rehearsals, included discussions and video documentation and watching. These varied activities accomplished intersecting physical, artistic and communication goals, while creating space for physical reprieve and recharging. These efforts aim at developing a model, or at least tools to make independent contemporary dance projects more sustainable for the artists engaging in them. Though none of the methods used are innovative onto themselves, there intentional application created an ecosystem of resources and processes from which four dancers with varied roles generated a choreographic work.

The results of this research pointed to the benefits of including periodized training, communication, and self-reflection inside of a rehearsal process mixing devising and set choreography, as well as the challenges of balancing timing, clarity, and structure within an unfolding creative endeavor. Though this is only a first trial of a **Creation Phase**, it was a rich process filled with trust, transparency, authenticity, release, validation, deep exploration, and embodied dancing. It points me towards ways I want to evolve my craft and shared practice with other dance artists. I hope that this research will benefit the artistic athleticism of dancers and the embodied, ethical practice of choreographers. The artistic questions and work that arose throughout the process will be examined in the following discussion chapter and accompanying videos.

The process brought:

- Trust
- Openness
- Authenticity
- Release
- Validation
- Deep Exploration
- Embodied dancing



Figure 4.3 Template for Artistic Periodization

CHAPITRE 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Incorporating Sustainable Practices

5.1.1 End Gaining vs. Process Led

Typically, sustainability in sport is thought of as referring to sustained high performance by individual athletes and/or teams and even more crudely as prolonged periods of winning (i.e. winning streaks and premiership-winning dynasties)... the view that sustainability can be usefully thought of as being about the development and maintenance of environments and behaviors that make efficient and ethical use of resources (human and other) was adopted (Wals & Jickling, 2002). (Steven B. Rynne & Clifford J. Mallett, 2014)

Incorporating *Sustainable Practices* for independent dancers in creation was the guiding principle for this research project where ecological tenets were translated into physiological and artistic processes. The notion of *Sustainability* was applied to the well-being of the dance artists by focusing on physiological energy expenditures in training and practice, and interrelationships in artistic interactions. This section explores the impact of focusing on the ecology of rehearsals systems. Specifically, how the non-linear periodization of conditioning, somatic and improvisational aspects of the warmup affected the creative work and how the mix of research action, devising and periodization were received.

There are inherent challenges in combining a goal-oriented training concept like *Periodization* with a process led *Research Creation* whose long-term goals are unknown. The goal-oriented end-gaining and instrumentation intrinsic to a sport approach of optimisation, runs counter to a process-oriented feedback loop of *Action Research Creation*, as well as feminist, marxist and ecological thought that critiques prioritising 'product of process'. Both rely on a similar dynamic of gradually evolving progressions, but one takes a meandering and adaptive path to an unknown destination, while the other implements progressive overload and tapering mechanisms. In both instances however, the end date of the project provides a goal, even if the activities on that day are less clear in art, than they are in competition. The form of athletic research used during *Iterations* falls into the category of non-linear periodization.

Said another way, like the melding of codified technique and improvisation in my choreography, this research involved mixing seemingly paradoxical approaches. The motivation in rehearsals for dancers and choreographer are often associated with performances. In an educational setting value is placed on the steady progression of abilities, but professionals come with skill sets and are hired based on their ability to

use them to generate ideas to share with audiences. Anne Bogart observes in *Viewpoints* how many actors no longer train (Bogart), dancers 'keep in shape' but there is little in the way of measure of their progression, other than feedback from outside eyes in rehearsal and audiences and critics in performances. The point being that the benefits derived from process activities need to be articulated more clearly and be paired with psychological support in order to motivate both choreographers and dancers to shift ways their ways of working. These observations are similar to the results around unmediated learning reported in the 2014 study by Rynne & Mallet, focusing on coaches learning and application of Sustainability practices with elite athletes in Australia. Learning from experience and comparing notes with peers are valuable experiences for teaching/coaching, but not common in terms of education and practice making. This approach to sustainability is not necessarily consistently applied, as it is dependent on the will of individuals. In their article on the implementation of psychological training in dance teaching, researchers found that creating a supportive environment motivated dancers' personal development.

Focusing on the process and not the outcome nurtures intrinsic motivation and should lead to prolonged engagement and enhanced well-being (Ryan and Deci 2000; Weiss and Amorose 2008). Creating a cohesive environment where students took classes for both personal development and performance-related reasons, as well as group- related reasons such as friendship and belonging, is also, according to SDT, favorable to psychological skills development as basic psychological needs such as competence, autonomy and relatedness are satisfied. (Klockare, Gustafsson & Nordin-Bates, 2011, p. 289).

5.1.2 Praxis as a Resource inside a Rehearsal Ecosystem

Back end: the part of a computer system or application that is not directly accessed by the user, typically, responsible for storing and manipulating data. (Oxford Dictionary 2022)

Training forges relationships, develops skill and provides opportunity for growth. Viewpoints training and Composition work allow actors and their collaborators to practice creating fiction together daily using tools of time and space. This daily practice keeps the artistic juices flowing, creates cohesive ensembles and allows individuals and groups to practice speaking the language of the stage. (Bogart & Landau, 2005, p.17)

In testing how training can be used in *Artistic Periodization* to prepare the aesthetic and physiological terrain for creation, I recounted in the interview with Caroline Charbonneau having had a refreshing experience working with talented peers who welcomed the training & artistic ideas proposed.

It's very gratifying because they really appreciated it (the warmup) and it made me feel that what I have to offer is valuable. I found that in terms of my own choreography, that strategy really worked. I chose dancers that I liked already, I had learned from our aesthetics class that your collaborators are important. (Van KERKHOVEN, 1994) and in this project everyone involved is just so great. So, what they were bringing to the table, I already liked. But I did find that feeding some of the backend of my own work, whether it was improvisation structures that have nourished me or training sequences I've been doing for a long time, just having that in the bodies of other people gave it the qualities that I wanted from the beginning. And so, I was really free to choreograph. (Flynn 2020).

In this creative ecosystem the training, communication, scheduling, and documentation tools were also used as resources fed into the creative work and experience of the dance artists from the outset. With a bank of common skills, scores and choreography, this research creation tested a process described in Carrie Noland's *Embodiment and Agency* where culturally inscribed movements are adapted and improved through individual agentic experience. My hypothesis was that taking time to prepare and cultivate a collective movement culture for the piece would save time that might have been spent coaching or cleaning material later and potentially resulting in injury and fatigue, common by-products of dance creations.

The concept of periodization as a method of performance enhancement has been proposed for use in the dance community (Wyon 2010). Periodization can be defined as a phasic training methodology enabling effective training management and performance enhancement (Lidor et al. 2016). Although periodization is standard practice in the athletic community, this method is often overlooked when assessing best practice in dance training and education. (DiPasquale 2018, p. 150-151)

The initial concepts and qualities for the dance I wanted to make, informed the content of the *Praxis*. Instead of end-gaining the process, these *Affordances* were shared with the dancers at the beginning of a *Generative Phase* of creation. The research exposed how this initial material generated movement ideas that were transformed and expanded by the dancers' embodied experience of them and in turn inspired my subsequent choices in a dynamic feedback loop. As Anne Bogart insists:

The reality is: source saves time. Time spent up front getting the company on the same page is time saved later from having to explain over and over again what the 'page' is. Coming to an agreement about goals and having a shared vocabulary saves time later, as everyone moves into staging, run-throughs tech, previews, opening. (Bogart & Landau p. 165)

Emily Jeffries masters' thesis looking at the concept of *Affordances* within the creation process analysed the practices offered by director Maresa Von Stockert to her and the other dancers in much the same way.

Affect and affordance were experienced in rehearsals as a means of connecting to peers and the rehearsal environment. In turn, they gave space and permission to the rehearsal environment to shift, to become other. This softening of previous formal definitions gave freedom to creativity and self. This is what I feel Stockert was most interested in. When we reached this point in the rehearsal process it seemed that her investment in sensory warmups and multiple guided improvisations began to live independently of her guidance. I had been affected through the process, and found I was able to guide myself. (Jeffries 2020, p. 34)

Jeffries statement illustrates that she had integrated the practices in such a way that they belonged to her. My research resonates with Jeffries reflections in the ways in which *kinaesthetic empathy* between choreographer and dancers develops through shared practices and witnessing peers improvise, and how this process generates agency, integration, and connection between dancers, inside of a rehearsal ecosystem, that she may not have otherwise not reached. These comments reflect the ways in which fostering Somatic awareness, alongside improvisational practice inside of the physical preparation generates *affordances/resources* within rehearsals, enriching the creation by honing attention, clarifying of intentions, and promoting physical receptivity. Similarly, when asked what she felt she learned from the process, Mairéad shared that she became aware of own inclinations through her interactions with everyone.

The research process also invited the dancers to reflect on their habits and experiences, which made everyone's strengths and approaches resources for the research, and created a space where we could all learn from each other.

5.1.3 Praxis as a Meditation

I named the training portion of the research, the *Praxis* because it is an enactment of the theories informing this research. The dancers' feedback around the way the training helped them to clear their minds and allowed them to drop into deeper creative states, has made me realise that this *Praxis* is not just about preparing, warming up and acquiring skills, as I derived from the concept of *Periodization*, but also serves the important function of dispelling tension and distraction. "I think that having the time mentally to clear away the clutter and really focus in on what the work is about, takes time. So that level of preparedness is important, this is the track we're on, this is what we're working on." (Mairead, 7:07). During an interview

for the podcast *Territoires Partagés*, Linda Rabin described a similar element of her choreography and teaching to me:

The dancing came out of the internal process explored with the individual dancers. There is always an 'emptying- out'... which is basically coming into a place of calm, of neutral, a kind of yielding, and from there, dropping a seed of a certain awareness or consciousness, either anatomical or through an image, for example it might be internalizing a color... cultivating the sensory, the "felt sense" of it, a real experience of it - go with that. So that became a big resource for how to create pieces and probably started to influence when I was rehearsing people. Looking at how they are moving, I could see when it was just being technical and when it was coming from that internal felt space. (Rabin 14:40)

Somatic activities within dance practices that allow people to open to a 'flow' state, lay the foundation for calming the nervous system and releasing of voluntary control from the pre-frontal cortex, make way for another type of work.

Skilled coordination is associated with efficiency, effectiveness, and a subject feeling of effortlessness...One well validated model for effortless attention in performance is the *flow* model developed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. *Flow* is a state of total immersion and absorption in the task at hand, with a commensurate lowering of the level of anxiety (Csikszentmihalyi 1990)." (Batson & Wilson, 2014, p.106)

My initial goal was to use dance training to get the dancers 'in shape for the work'. One of the things I learned from the process was that entering a creative embodied state inside of rehearsal is also about letting go. The Praxis served the purpose of preparation not only by warming up and building abilities, but also by providing a space to empty minds and release bodies and attune not only to the content of the work, but to deeper awareness of the processes going on around and in us all of the time. This in turn led us to engage in dialogue with space, music, light and each other with nuanced amplification of our lived experience through physical expression, theatricality and musicality.

Le travail sensoriel multiple du danseur porte en lui-même une fiction originaire qu'il pourrait très bien se contenter d'exploiter [...] il suffit qu'il travaille fondamentalement sur ce qu'il produit par sa propre sensorialité. Car, que désigne ce qu'on appelle habituellement la musicalité, la théâtralité, l'expressivité du mouvement dansé. Le lien imaginaire qu'il y a entre la sensation et l'imaginaire, mais rabattu sur la dimension rythmique quand il s'agit de musique, sur la distorsion qui entre dans le jeu spéculaire immanent au théâtre, quand il s'agit de théâtralité, ou sur la dynamique pulsionnelle et affective qui parcourt le mouvement dansé, quand il s'agit de l'expressivité. » (Bernard, 1993, p.64)

5.1.4 Balancing Time for Somatics within a Periodized Process

Time is a precious resource inside of fleeting rehearsal periods, and the way it is distributed throughout activities is indicative of what is being valued in the process. Since I tend to work intuitively, scheduling time for training, rest, solo research, integration, etc. inside the process, was important to ensuring that they happened. Applying the steady progression of periodized training was a balancing act between preparing and adapting for individual rehearsals, as well as building faculties over time. Mairéad shared that she initially worried that the training would take away from creation, but instead of the preparation taking time away from the work, she found it expedited a deep engagement *Flow* state (Bales & Wilson).

Even though by the end of the process we had not made a finished work, nor devoted much time specifically to coaching and refining interpretive choices, I was very happy with the embodiment of the movement and transformative emotional states in the work. The hybrid training method had a very positive impact on the level of embodiment and subtlety of interpretation of the dancers' performances. I noticed the absence of 'staleness' because the dancers were actively engaging in the material. I would attribute this to the tasks they were researching, as well as the modulating 3–4-day schedule. "You know like what's important about the work remains. You come back fresh. You come back with like gratitude I find. Like any project where I take breaks, I always find whatever tiredness or challenges come up. It's usually just like a nice reset somehow." (Mairéad, 22:45). Again, this is supported by research into over exertion (Rafferty, Wyon, Stevenson). To return to the basic premise behind the research, '*Working harder is not necessarily working smarter*'. Or more accurately, working longer hours does not equate more productivity in any field, but especially when people are exerted considerable amount of both physical and mental energy, as dancers are. Acknowledging energy usage is a key component of applying ecological principals in any type of resource management. This applies to dance by balancing adrenalized effort/exertion with efficiency and activities that provide release and regaining energy. It also means creating space in people's schedule so that they come back 'fresh'. The rekindled energy created by spaciousness in scheduling and rehearsal practices points to a different form of surplus. Not in the measurable physiological sphere of cardiovascular stamina or strength, but a type of renewed inspiration, understanding and integrated capacity for the work both psychologically and physiologically. The financial precarity and stress experienced by dancers and choreographers is another reason that practicing the shift between the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system can be beneficial in rehearsal and sustaining ourselves over time.

Gielan compares the experience of displaced workers to the reality of freelance artists, even though one's reality is extremely dire, both operate in a type of fight or flight survival mode. The modulation and reduction of activities scheduled, changes the relationship with time and one's energy. My experience in this creation with exploring recuperation in methodology bled into the work. We created a whole section grounded in rest and subtlety that led into a type of research I have rarely put in my work. Historically I've explored tension, angst, conflict, ecstasy, but this other register brought us into dreams, growth, listening and opening to other influences. Though it started quietly, it built up in dynamics with a type of internal engine that didn't have to be forced from the outside. I feel artistically this is a new area that offers new uncharted areas for my explorations and creations in dance. In an interview for Territoires Partagées, Andrew Harwood poetically explained to me a type of observation that's made possible by removing habitual actions and excess effort. This almost Buddhist approach to improvisation stems from being with and engaging with what is in the present moment with open systems and an evolving practice of listening.

Steve (Paxton) always considered *Contact Improvisation* to be composition and the main difference is that you are composing in the moment, making immediate not predetermined choices, not doing moves that someone else already determined that you do. You are making choices right now in the moment, so that sense of immediacy, to make an efficient choice. Not always the right choice, because sometimes you don't always make the right choice and you can feel that the little « ah! ». But with a little bit of practice, you learn to be a little more efficient with the choice making in the moment. You have to be in the moment to do that. You can't be ahead of yourself; and you can't think about what didn't work 5 seconds ago either. (Harwood 2019)

Working with attention emerges as a key element to an improvising dancers' practice, as an ability to play with one's perception of time and thus physical relationship to it. When we rush, try too hard, we miss layers of possibilities available to the work and can be trapped in a type of formal superficiality. Being confined to this level of physical exertion without sufficient feedback, breathe and respite creates dance art that can be both artistically arrow and damaging for dancers' body/mind. The cycle of asking for more without feeding in resources such as inspiration, rest or problem solving are often factors that create tension in terms of working relationships. These tensions barely occurred throughout this process and the interpreters dancing was always engaging and powerfully authentic from my perspective. The space for rest, the preparation of training and the adaptation of activities around dancer feedback were factors contributing to dancers' commitment, health and abilities throughout the process.

5.1.5 Periodized Hybrid Training

One of the main ways this research applied the notion of *Periodization* was to reverse engineer the process. In my choreographic practice I am used to letting a process lead, but *Periodization* implies designing programs to create the necessary abilities to achieve goals and building in periods of preparation and rest. Even though the end goal with a new creation is vague at best, I did know the types of skills and qualities that are important in my work, as well as the project's end date. With my aesthetic influences in mind, I shared the backend of my dance practice through hybrid training warm up and creation practices in rehearsals. The goal was to effectively prepare two dancers physically and artistically for devising a piece together and where possible, avoid actions that can often lead to or exacerbate injury and conflict, often connected to using repetition to 'clean' a piece at the end of a process.

The approaches to embodiment in the training for the work ran the gamut from neoclassical, post-modern, contact improvisation and punk rock infused contemporary dance. These influences have stylistic, technical, and philosophical differences that approach movement making from distinctive angles. The warmup used somatic exercises to calm the body and cultivate awareness, conditioning, and dance sequences to prepare the body for technically demanding work and improvisational scores to practice compositional and interpretive skills and generate new ideas. Initially the practice involved learning each separately, where the somatic nurtured kinaesthetic receptivity, the conditioning prepared foundational coordination patterns, strength, mobility, and stamina; and improvisation brought awareness of state and quality in the moment by magnifying physical experience. Finally, the practice truly involved remixing these three components, and modulating how and when they were applied within an environment of sound and spatial design. There are many precedents for practicing skills and applying them through chance. "It's the same thing as in sports, you know, when you apply those techniques in a very improvised way... I think it's very similar with *contact*. You learn how to fall, you learn how to lift, you learn how to roll, these are basic techniques, that you learn and you apply them in a very improvised context. (Harwood 2019).

This kind of work is commonplace in sport, theatre, comedy and music, and any profession where people engage their knowledge and skills spontaneously. Contact Improvisation, Somatic education, Physical theatre, Butoh and Martial Arts have brought this way of working into the wider field of Contemporary dance (Bales Nettl-Fiol, Nelson, Stuart, Harwood). Drawing on somatic exercises inspired by Yoga, Bartenieff, Feldenkrais, Irene Dowd, Alexander technique, Butoh and Contact Improvisation, we were worked with layers of images and relationships to Labanian concepts of time, space, flow and gravity. The

Praxis was also comprised of a bank of exercises & scores I've generated throughout my career while improvising, teaching and choreographing. I also made use of assessment and movement analysis experience gleaned through working with Pilates clients, students in training programs and studying OAM and AFCMD in the master's program at UQÀM with Nicole Harbonnier. These insights allowed me to select preparatory exercises for these specific dancers, that favoured stability, mobility, strength and stamina.

5.1.6 Non-Linear Artistic Periodization

The dancers had different training experiences. Mairéad had been training in dance from a young age, but has less exposure to fitness training. Melina began studying dance intensively in late teens and is also a fitness and Pilates trainer.

The way in which Periodization was applied through the two 3-week mesocycles and managed during shorter micro cycles of this research was adaptive to dancers needs in terms of our rehearsal activities and their other daily responsibilities. Drawing inspiration from non-linear periodization for rehabilitation (Lorenz, Reiman & Walker 2010, Devilla 2016) and for confidence (Vealy 2019) because dancers are dealing with chronic injuries and psychology affects performance.

The term nonlinear periodization has become more favorable compared to undulating periodization. Nonlinear periodization is based on the concept that volume and load are altered more frequently (daily, weekly, biweekly) to allow the neuromuscular system more frequent periods of recovery. Phases are much shorter, providing more frequent changes in stimuli, which may be highly conducive to strength gains. Kraemer⁵⁹ and Fleck⁴¹ expanded this concept by including planned versus flexible nonlinear periodization. The planned model follows predicted loading schemes, but the flexible plan allows the clinician to adjust the plan based on the status of the athlete. (Lorenz, D., Reiman, M., & Walker, J., 2010, p. 211)

Application of periodization in non-linear ways was useful because (older) dancers have chronic injuries it allows for adaptation for their physical protection. Due to the pandemic, we were all somewhat out of shape, which means that injuries can flare up. We could not work with weights because gyms were shut down, nor partnering work because it was too risky to be in close contact. *Iterations* utilized education and acquisition and inserted recuperative phases and tasks between and prior to practice phases. Loads were increased using variations of supports, for instance performing an exercise on knees and elbows, and then eventually moving to hands and feet to increase lever. Repetitions were increased, base reduced, speed increased, resistance created using the floor and coordination and balance challenged. We did not do a ton of exercises for power, with high intensity and maximum exertion although the use of jumps and speed

of sequence increased progressively over time. “There is a significant challenge lies in designing optimal training programs that facilitate neuro and muscular adaptations while being mindful of biological healing and the safety of the athlete.” (Lorenz & Walker 2010, p. 509). We did not do a ton of exercises for power, with high intensity and maximum exertion, although the use of jumps and speed of sequence increased progressively over time. Focused more on endurance, mobility/flexibility, coordination, proprioception & intero/exteroception by increasing volume.

Although dancers saw themselves in choreographic explorations, they had fewer references for the improvement of their skills and capacities. In future exploration of these ideas, it would be useful to systematically record one day a week of training and have this documentation available to dancers and/or use other methods to chart their progress. The dancers commented in the interviews they felt they could have been pushed more. However, as trainer and choreographer and in conversation with the dramaturge we saw the progressive increase of capacities in terms stamina, dexterity, speed and ability to modulate. Perhaps the absence of usual fatigue and injuries were not as present gave dancers less of a sense of their effort, but also the positive outcomes of recuperative and training tactics, could have been used to push capacities further. In future experimentations, performers could be challenged more, in combination with journals, videos and other measures make them plainly aware of their progress overtime.

5.2 Training Results Discussed

5.2.1 Artistic Qualities

I did not make this melding practice explicit to the dancers, but they independently remarked on the ways in which the warmup and improvisation practices made their way into the work. For instance, when asked about how the training influenced the creation, Mairéad’s reaction was,

Is this divorced from working on the piece, because sometimes it melded, which was a beautiful thing. I mean it created depth in the work and for sure influenced it. I don't know what came first for Erin? It seemed like she was letting the material lead and that she was working intuitively; I don't necessarily think that she had a fixed vision in her brain of what this thing is going to be. So those things that we explored in the warm-ups would make their way into the process, into what we ended up deciding upon for the final version. (Mairéad, 15:18)

The time devoted to training functioned very effectively when it came to the physicality and interpretive qualities of the dancers. Mairéad and Melina noticed how the choreography aligned with the preparation.

“It was neat to learn or to just see the connections between how Erin would train and then her artistic movement. That was really interesting, because it would be different for me, or different for everybody. Yeah, to see that relationship to her material was something I learned.” (Melina, 51:20). Both Mairéad and Melina are experienced and sophisticated performers, but I noticed this specific work created common qualities of sensuality contrasted by a potent force, a heightened listening between them, and a sense of rhythm and attack that showed a contagion with my movement style, while maintaining the ‘somatic signature’ (Cools 2015) of the interpreters. This was a choreographic goal of mine, that can be observed in accompanying videos.

The training included incremental increases in the duration and complexity of activities followed by some rest periods (3-4 days a week, including shorter mornings, to balance longer afternoon rehearsals). To avoid the diminishment of the dancers mental or physical capacities, avoiding excessive repetition and not explore overloading (surcharge) to increase facilities as far as I might have. We successfully increased abilities, avoided serious injuries and poor performance from exhaustion, although at a couple of points on the filming days came close. The progression was steady enough that the dancers did not necessarily notice the increasing demands, benefits of rest or improvement in their aptitudes in the ways that were clear from the outside. Specifically, there was an increase in the capabilities to handle several tasks at once, maintain stamina, physical force and in interpretive depth in longer sections. The aptitude to create quick shifts and fragment and deconstruct states from contained bound flow to multi directional erratic energy, or from circular spirals into precise angular movement, all while executing challenging technical movement, demonstrated that the approach taken successfully cultivated the ability to perform on multiple registers simultaneously. Video footage of the process and piece found in the annex and methodology chapters support this statement.

5.2.2 Personalized Training Plan

The success of Artistic Periodization is dependent on how it is applied. Since time and money are ever present issues for dance artists, personalized programs of exercises and ideal rest periods could either give dancers added responsibility, or agency in the process of integrating periodization. The training progressed over time, but not to the extent to provide a significant surplus. The project took place over 7 weeks with 6 active weeks, which is too short a period in which to create substantial physiological shifts. The dancers experienced the most physically and mentally demanding days when we filmed the work. This replicates what often occurs in dance processes when the project enters the theatre. I was aiming to build the surplus

prior to this and cut back prior to filming days, but artistically the piece was coming together with the final order in the last two weeks. The reduction of rehearsals the last week, created memory challenges for the dancers in fact. Production pressures also meant that the schedule was denser than I had hoped, due to the pressure to meet requirements for documentation and the presence of collaborators.

The demands of the choreography pushed closer to the edge of capacities over time near the end of the process. As the ultimate direction of the work was coming into focus, the training program was adapted in consequence, increasing loads directly associated to building and compensating for the exigencies of the piece.

When a piece is further along its development the Periodization progression could be improved by designing personalized and group routines with more specific, consistent, and rigorous content in relation to specific aspects of choreography, in addition to scheduling a more extreme build-up with appropriate rest periods over time. "Give us a training plan that we could do on our own, a kind of thing where it would be clearer for us how to manage that time." (Melina, 59:50). An aspect that comes up in Melina's statement is that varying the activities in the warmup. as I did in this research to avoid repetitive injuries, makes tracking and memorising difficult to the dancers. Perhaps a better approach would be to make program A, B & C and roll between them, so that the repetition of the material is more obvious to dancers and easier for them to integrate consciously. Another addition to future research could be to have days devoted to different aspects, two high intensity days, a restorative day, video watching and editing day. In this way, the modulation of activities could be variable but also predictable. Melina's suggestion offers another way to prioritize constructive ways of increasing pressure, without resorting to the power dynamics often employed to get dancers to perform. This way of working could also be applied to remounting of a pre-existing work, that is by nature more structured and solidified.

I also considered dancers requests on given days. In the future it would be positive to formalise these two processes. To discuss with the dancers or survey them what they felt they needed in terms of warm up, training and cold down at the end of a week or phase and plan for it more specifically. Also, their contributions either of suggestions or leading the group would be a useful way of adding complimentary exercises and cross training. Melina led the warmup on our last day of filming, and it would be a great practice to integrate more frequently and make the process more democratic contribute to the group cohesion and motivation in positive respects in the future.

5.3 Process Phases

This process recognised the inherent value of the collaborators and sought to support their thriving. The was no direct path to a predetermined goal, but rather an adaptive structure. After two 3-week periods of *Generative* creation, the form of the piece started to emerge in 2 distinct sections. General needs can be anticipated, but specific practices aligned with emerging goals are difficult to predetermine. Had the process continued into *Editing* and *Refinement* phases, the training practices could have been adapted to support the more defined piece. A key difference between sport and classical dance forms and devising in the spirit of post-modernism, is that the unknown plays an important part in artistic practice. A process led collaborative piece materializes, out of the possibilities generated by the combination of tools used by individuals forming a particular group chemistry. The artistic working structure was inspired by Devising/Composing techniques and the collaborative design template created by the Halprin's RSVP cycles. Anne Bogart and Tina Landau do wonderful job of articulating this type of approach and the challenges it presents in going against traditional directorial patterns/roles.

Is it correct to assume that the actor's job is to do what the director "wants", and the director's job to know above all else what s/he wants and demand it? The specific language used during a rehearsal impacts the quality of the relationships between people as well as the tone of the environment. The word 'want' - much overused and abused in our American system of rehearsing a play - implies a right and wrong. It encourages artists to search for a single satisfying choice, driven by seeking approval from an absolute authority. Many young directors assume that their job is to know what they want and to insist on it [...] How often can an actor ask a director: "Is this what you want?" before the contribution of that actor is completely negated? Why not ask instead what the play wants? The director and the actor are then united in a mutual endeavor. The word "want," used habitually and without consciousness of the consequences, constructs a parent/child relationship in rehearsal. This parent/child relationship limits resiliency, rigor and maturity in the creative process and inhibits true collaboration. Can the artistic process be collaborative? Can a group of strong- minded individuals together ask what the play or project wants, rather than depending upon the hierarchical domination of one person? Of course, a project needs structure and a sense of direction, but can the leader aim for discovery rather than staging a replica of what s/he has decided beforehand? Can we resist proclaiming "what it is" long enough to authentically ask: "What is it? ". The exploration of a theme, the discovery of staging and the excavation of language, for instance, can all be a collective act in which ideas are proposed and adjustments made by all parties. *Viewpoints* and *Composition* offer a way to collectively address the questions that arise during rehearsal. Actors, freed from seeking parental approval, are given responsibility as co-creators of the event. *Viewpoints* and *Composition* shift the tables so that every participant must find a compelling reason to be in the room, to have a stake in the process, and to claim ownership in the outcome. (Bogart & Landua, 2012, p. 18)

Mairéad and I had a few discussions around setting ideas early in the research. From the dancer's point of view, limiting the choices frees them up to dive more deeply into the known work. I resisted fixing the material, because I was interested in seeing what directions the work could generate and not making my habitual choices. To do this necessitated leaving scores open for a longer period of time for me to gain distance and for the work to come together on its own.

I guess in my own processes, as a choreographer and as a dancer, including this one and others, I wrestle with those things. I want to solidify, and I want to know what it is so that I can somehow understand and go deeper in, and really work on it. And at the same time, once it starts to solidify, there's something slightly like dissatisfying about that because the freedom, of course, like floats away, you know? And finding that line, sometimes with another person, it's hard to understand what they want or what their idea is, between those things. Because Erin was very open in terms of like the freedom that she gave us, but it can still be difficult to understand. I've worked with Erin before and so I start to learn how her mind works, her tendencies and how they mingle with mine. How our dynamics work well together, or the places where I push up against it. So [...] I crave a little bit more solidity sooner, so that could be kind of challenging. (Mairéad 21:07)

The responsibility to make quick choices in rehearsal can be challenging at a certain point in the process for me, not because I am unable to choose, but I desire time to sit with what the work is becoming. Since the goal of this project was to support dancers, there needs to be ways that they feel as implicated in the searching and realized the power they must make choices based on their own perceptions. Since I initiated this research project, it follows that Mairéad and Melina would appeal to my sensibilities. Have deep and frank conversations and even negotiations about collaborative preferences early in a process could be a way to clarify roles and facilitate collaboration and overcome the desire to make all the decisions. As already established, in embodying the work dancers are already making a multitude of decisions and as improvisers and interpreters can feel empowered in their artistic decisions as well. Feedback from choreographer and dramaturge can then be around the impact of dancers' choices on the work as a whole and a conversation between equals can follow, focused on creating together - rather than imposing decisions or drawing a performance out. My steadfastness on this point aligns with Bogart and Landau's perspective quoted above, *that we need to listen to what the piece needs*.

5.3.1 Transitioning: from Generating to Editing to Performance

The movement from the studio to the stage is another vulnerable point where dancers need to feel empowered to make decisions if the work is somewhat open. So many of us have received notes on our performances our whole careers and it is important to find other sources that can give dancers faith in

their own decisions. The personal investment in the work is ideal but not obvious to create. The responsibility to make quick choices in rehearsal can be challenging at a certain point in the process for me, not because I am unable to choose, but I desire time to sit with what the work is becoming. Since the goal of this project was to support dancers, there needs to be ways that they feel as implicated in the searching and realized that they must make choices based on their own perceptions. Since I initiated this research project, it follows that Mairéad and Melina would appeal to my sensibilities. Having deep and frank conversations and even negotiations about collaborative preferences early in a process could be a way to clarify roles, facilitate collaboration and overcome the desire to make all the decisions. As already established, in embodying the work dancers are making a multitude of decisions, as improvisers and interpreters, and feel empowered in these artistic decisions. Feedback from choreographer and dramaturg can then be around the impact of dancers' choices on the work as a whole and a conversation between equals can follow, focused on creating together - rather than imposing decisions or drawing a performance out. My steadfastness on this point aligns with Bogart and Landau's perspective quoted above, *that we need to listen to what the piece needs*.

I think the time that I felt most challenged, it was just that sort of moment or that place between performing and rehearsal and performance going into that, which I think is always, there's always some kind of stress or challenge around that. Almost inevitably, in one way or another. If there is any kind of stress or personal challenge, it was in that process of filming, or right before filming. And trying to understand the amount of structure needed or have the confidence of what I was figuring out, what I needed to know to have the confidence to do that. But overall, it was a very enjoyable, fluid, great open process. (Mairéad, 52:49)

By practicing within defined parameters, I hoped to facilitate a productive process of communication and generation, and bypass damaging rehearsal activities. Reconceptualising goal-oriented definitions of productivity in the context of a creative process in dance. The process had reached a point of choice making when we filmed and I did make executive decisions prior to filming, but the dancers also made very strong interpretive choices during the shoot. What we skipped in this short creation process were the *Editing* and *Refining* phases, where researching ways to structure the training and creative work and facilitating decision making would be important. Lawrence Halprin's RSVP cycle design model could be adapted and used. What would be interesting to explore is how to continue this evolution with a spirit of learning and adaptation. Not searching for an ultimate answer, but getting more specific about parameters that are still flexible and build adaptation into the structure could provide a compromise. Like a Tensegrity (Buckminster-Fuller) model for creation, where the work is designed to absorb stress through elastic interconnected structures that distribute pressure, rather than concentrate it.

5.3.2 Tapering - How does preparedness relate to freedom in performance?

This research creation only delved into the Generative phase of a creation process. Shifting from research into Editing, Refinement, and then Performance are all valuable stages that could be given time and space and further research. In the inevitable stress of the transition of going from a rehearsal period into performance (s). The challenges that emerged from the filming highlight important needs that could be supported in future phases by other practices. Tapering at the end at the end of the Generative Phase when longer sections were just coming together, did not give the dancers adequate time to assimilate the material in their memories, bodies or build the stamina or interpretive thru line that can fully support these endeavours. There are practical challenges of enacting theory, diminishing effort prior to performance in dance needs to be approached differently due to production and memory concerns. Techniques that reinforce memory and cognitive pathways without adding excessive repetition such as visualisation, writing and marking could be used to boost memory while allowing dancers to conserve physical and mental energy by resting. Tapering and Periodization should include consideration of cognitive load, and also reinforce mental pathways. The repetition needed to create ease in performance, but without going through the motions in a hollow or excessive way. Rather approaching repetition as ritual or meditation as in martial arts: "It is important to emphasize, however, that it is not mere repetition alone that makes the difference. Rather, it is attending to the *subtleties* of embodied sensation within repeated practiced that bodies are constructed anew' (ibid:74, Batson and Wilson 2014, p, 113). Even though the impact of a modulating schedule wasn't entirely obvious or successful, the richness it created in the performer's embodiment, coupled with the lack of exhaustion or injury, suggest its worthwhile to explore how to effectively use it in the future.

5.4 Impact of Periodization on Choreographer

Choreographers have administrative and logistical responsibilities, alongside creative work and support structures for independent creators are often lacking. This research focused on supporting dancers' wellbeing holistically, but it became clear that since the choreographer is designing and leading the project, their actions feedback into the process, directly impacting dancers. Research into the creative process for choreographers, such as ideal structures for their tasks and what methods could facilitate choreographic decision making can also play an important part in the application of *Sustainable Artistic Periodization*. The section traces the beneficial and challenging aspect of this research on my own choreographic process.

Maybe that was difficult for her to have that extra responsibility? I can't speak to how she lived through her workload of it. I guess the challenge I could perceive for Erin is in terms of time management, because that's a hard thing to manage. She's got to lead the warm-up, as well as everything else, so I don't know how that was for her, but I still think that it was efficient to do it because it accomplished all these other things. (Melina, 14:57)

The application of *Artistic Periodization* added extra responsibility and increased workload for me, in terms of designing the training programs, strategic planning, as well as intensified time management pressures before and during rehearsals. Despite this extra work, I benefitted from the training, goal setting and modulating schedule. The training and tempered schedule kept me engaged, lowered stress levels, and provided time to reflect and research on my own. Specifically, creating the warmup and cool down clarified methods, generated ideas and I benefited from the shared training in terms of developing my capacities and connecting to the parasympathetic nervous system in much the same ways the dancers articulated. The time taken at the beginning of the process, saved effort, and avoided excessive cleaning to define the aesthetic of the work later. It provided a space, structure, and peers with whom I could learn new ways of working, become aware of existing habits and what I need to improve; as well as a space to experiment, apply and reflect on the research I have done over the past six years, and throughout my career. Moving forward, I would consider the needs of the choreographer and dramaturge, alongside of the dancers in editing, refining and performance phases and the transition periods out each. This support would take the form of time for reflection and editing, inviting in small groups to test drive the work and applying for funding to hire a coach, rehearsal director and administrator to share the workload. Having the dancers and dramaturge add to and lead the praxis and cool down sessions would also help distribute some of the extra labour proposed in this research.

5.5 Encapsulating Improvisation Ideas

There is no way to repress pleasure and expect liberation, satisfaction, or joy. (Brown, 2019)

Improvisation with known choreographic material yields the most inventive and connected movement for me. I was looking for a way to transfer this way of generating vocabulary without asking dancers to recreate it exactly from video or copying me while I improvised in the studio with them. Both methods, I have done a lot in my career as a dancer and have often found the situation competitive, frustrating, and dry. Acknowledging and facilitating the astonishing skills asked of professional dancers is a major motivation for my research. As an active dancer and choreographer, it is very important to me to not replicate the challenging situations I have experienced as a dancer and to make way for the transcendent

and positive experiences dance has provided. One of these is being asked to compete to memorise and perform material as soon as a choreographer dances or suggests it. Even the dancers blessed with incredible memories and abilities to translate movement quickly miss opportunities for depth, ingenuity, and their own experience in the movement. I am interested in letting ideas sink in at deeper levels and this requires patience and other work arounds. The alternative choreographic strategy tested was to share the building blocks of different aspects of the material in digestible chunks and releasing the desire for exact replicas of my movements. In a practice I learned working for Isabelle Van Grimde while dancing and acting as her assistant during my six years with her company Corps Secrets, I developed a bank of material that we drew on. Practicing state and perception based improvisational scores inspired by my own work and Andrew Harwood, Lisa Nelson and Meg Stuart, was another way of providing common tools for remixing movement vocabulary, alongside emotional and theatrical intention to guide the progression of movement ideas from the inside for the dancers. Brianna, as dramaturge, also shared imagery and a variety of complimentary approaches from her vast experience and insightful feedback with the dancers throughout rehearsals. The goal was to provide agency, skip excessive repetition that causes injury and avoid tasks that create mental frustration and communication challenges. I attempted to design a system that would generate the piece while retaining some choice making privileges and provide agency for performers in the moment. The challenging goal aimed to support freedom of choice within a defined landscape of movement and tasks.

5.5.1 Devising – Agency & Responsibilities

These alternative practices come with their own complexities and challenges. Set material, prescriptive decisions by an auteur although physically demanding for dancers, also take the responsibility for artistic proposal off dancers' shoulders and into the choreographer's hand – freeing dancers to focus on their performances. Conversely, *devising* in creation and *improvising* on stage puts more compositional responsibilities on dancers. For the methodology I am proposing to support dancers in performance, the structures and practices used during the process need to strongly define the creative direction enough that it is the piece that is leading in performance as well. Rigor, discipline, repetition, and hierarchy are elements that are very familiar and foundational to the experience of my generation of dancers and running counter to these practices is uncomfortable. This created some challenges in communicating my vision and is frequently contrary to the expectations ingrained in practice. Developing skill and strength in unfamiliar ways of working takes time, time to digest material, to create new habits, identify useful practices and ideas, and to face our individual challenges of adapting to change. This preliminary study of

Sustainable Artistic Periodization revealed a need for additional skills and concepts to facilitate both dancers and choreographers' tasks throughout all of the cycles of creation and production, especially for narrowing the field of choices, commit set elements to memory, and train stamina to sustain the dynamic arc of the piece. The less hierarchical approach leads into a discussion of how decisions get made if there is no authoritative director at the top? There can be infinite permutations of collaborations, but in what I was interested in during this process was finding ways to let the emerging work lead, rather than my preconceived habits. Ultimately having initiated the work and directing it, I am still making directorial choices, but I was interested in culling from a collaborative process where the performers had a voice and agency, rather than imposing a predetermined vision. Searching for a way that I can continue to follow my curiosity and learning, rather than feeling the constant need to make decisions before I have time to sit with ideas. Where I am less in fight or flight responses and instead open to letting editorial choices dialogue with emerging ideas.

Surrender: Viewpoints relieves the pressure to have to invent by yourself, to generate all alone, to be interesting and force creativity. *Viewpoints* allows us to surrender, fall back into empty creative space and trust that there is something there, other than our own ego or imagination, to catch us. *Viewpoints* helps us trust in letting something occur onstage, rather than making it occur. The source for action and invention comes to us from others and from the physical world around us...

Wholeness: Viewpoints awakens all our senses, making it clear how much and how often we live only in our heads and see only through our eyes. Through *Viewpoints* we learn to listen with our entire bodies and see with a sixth sense. We receive information from levels we were not even aware existed and begin to communicate back with equal depth. (Bogart & Landua, 2012, pp. 19-20)

As a choreographer, I see myself more as an instigator, curator, director, but am interested in a post-modern aesthetic where there are multiple points of view and parallel universes coexisting within a piece. Creating works whose structures are strong enough, or whose edges are wide enough to create space not only for individual somatic signatures, as also other points of view. What gets confusing is that even when directors move away from a role as auteur, their point of view may still be appealed to because people are conditioned to be motivated by authority and validation, and performers are willing to sacrifice much in exchange for stage time. Trusting a director or choreographer takes away responsibility for the meaning of the work. From this inside it is difficult to see the whole, so this outside perspective is also essential to creating good work. Smart in article "The Feeling of Devising" notes the challenges of truly collaborating and a natural tendency to cede control to a directorial point of view. As a choreographer, I find this natural

but am interested in prolonging the generative phase in order to maximise the potential group intelligence and power of interrelation perspectives. This potentially allows multiple realities to be simultaneously represented, increasing the chances to be intersectional, innovative and transcend and/or expose conditioned bias.

Due to the nature of a performers work, there need to be mechanisms that allow them to see the whole if they are to trust themselves and take ownership of their choices, as much as a choreographer. This can mean giving actors/dancers/performers/musicians more say in how rehearsals go, the space to communicate what they need inside of a run and a safe way of altering the direction of the performance if need be. Perfectionism emerges when we walk the line between rigor and freedom. How do we get comfortable allowing chance into our creative work and develop faith in our collective and individual abilities to respond to larger or unforeseen realities adding meaning or creating obstacles to performance? How do we face not perfectly sculpting the way we are going to be seen, and accept the vulnerability brought out by accidents and transparency. This quote from Frantic Assembly reveals the messiness of the process.

At such times it is important to remember that the rehearsal process is a totally non-linear, half of your ideas will not come to fruition halfway through the rehearsals and it is unlikely that in the third week of a four-week rehearsal schedule you will be sat on 75 percent of the finished product. Most rehearsals are a haphazard cumulative event where clarity and creativity collectively form half of the requisite qualities. The other half requires you to hold your nerve. At various times throughout our career, we have been great at this. At other times, the lack has caused us great anguish and sever doubt. The ability to hold one's nerve is affected not only by the state of affairs within the room, but also personal lives, the prevailing cultural climate at the time, the well-being of the producing company, the tenacity and interrelationships within the creative team. But there is nothing more satisfying than emerging from the very frontier of chaos and returning with something beyond the artistic expectations of the rehearsals process. Our devising is broken down into tasks. These remain bite sized and self-contained. They never set out to encapsulate the whole production idea or solve the entire demands of the text, they are always as simple as merely building blocks, created to support more blocks. (Graham & Hoggett, 2009, p. 6-7)

The live arts are so highly controlled, and micromanaging is part of the culture of dance production in my experience. This alternative way of working was seen by one dancer as shirking responsibility. The other dancer was comfortable with the chaos in the context, but would have craved more solidity in actual performance. Time is the real ingredient that would have made this possible, as well as more sharing and reflecting from audiences and documentation. Continuing the research action and creation process into

editing, refinement, production phases including a technical residency and dress rehearsal would have continued towards problem solving and created neural pathways and coordination patterns through a shared history of growing the piece together. Over a longer period the *praxis* could venture further into conditioning engrams of movement patterns, building up muscle memory, cognitive pathways and shorthand references, which would in turn free up attentional space for perceiving internal sensation and reacting to the environment during performances. In this way the invention of the generative phase could shift from creating content to interpreting and adapting in confident and spontaneous ways.

5.5.2 Challenges of Improvisation as a Source

Only those who can tell and retell themselves and their place in the world, only those who *take* the time for this and *take up* their own place and thereby relate and define themselves with regard to their social and natural environment are capable of generating a 'Sustainable Self'. Opposite the above-described external trauma of the sudden memory that interrupts daily life through digital media, artists posit a narrative memory in which sudden events can be re-interpreted: literally, be given a place, a bottom. Together with the situation, artist create their own spatial-temporal momentum, an intense event in which they ground themselves. (Gielen, 2014, p.39)

I approached this project with a desire to 'ground myself' and transmute the pain and trauma experienced during parts of my training and career in to something positive that returned back to my original love of dance and honoured the beautiful experiences it has also given me. Choosing to make live, embodied art that is a movement towards relational incarnation and away from instrumentation and superficial beauty. The intention behind using improvisation in both the creative process and performance was to ground the performance of choreography in the present moment. Improvisation implicates both the interpreters and choreographer in the responsibility of the content and structure and could easily bring too much weight on the shoulders of the dancers, and for this reason as a choreographer I wanted to explore ways that I can define the parameters, aesthetic and compositional choices while leaving room for the impulses, experiences, and somatic signatures of dancers.

In the rehearsal process for *Iterations – Shots in the Dark*, warmup sessions led into improvisational scores that generated choreographic material. Creating using a devising process is commonplace in contemporary dance, but artists are not necessarily trained in a manner that supports this type of collaborative process, and the culture is often structured hierarchically. I was interested in exploring ways of leading that involved how the project was designed from the outset, rather than imposed by my whims during the process. This approach created both positive and challenging results for dancers, partly because of their own

expectations and in terms of my responsibilities as a choreographer. Dancers tended to want choices to solidify to be able to go deeper through comprehension, whereas I wanted choreographic options during this generative phase. When so many pieces are created in this way, it is my hope that our research can be food for thought for other artists. Here is what we learned and where we were challenged:

Positive	Negative
Open	Criticism, evaluation
Free in moment, Creative, Spontaneous	Ideas are handed over to others Skills or ideas go unrecognised
Safe	Conflict
Confidence	Uncertainty, Insecurity
Acceptance, Trust	Rejection
Generate interesting material	Difficult to reconstruct

Table 5-1 Learnings and challenges

5.5.3 Challenges to Confidence - Set Choreography vs. Improvisation

As previously mentioned, psychological periodization to encourage confidence and well-being were also built into *Iterations*. The strategies utilised check-in's, discussion, video watching, progressive learning and improvisation. Some of these methods were more effective than others. As noted in the *Results* chapter the training, video watching, check-ins and communication techniques were appreciated by Mairéad and Melina. The uses of improvisation varied. Personally, as a dancer improvisation allows me to side-step perfectionist tendencies and connect to creative artistic sources in studio and to be at ease with changing circumstances in performance. As noted by Bienaise, Fortin and Newell, dancers have different dispositions and have their own relationships to improvisation. In order to support dancers well-being, it is important to understand their relationship to methods and views on creation. Improvising in front of a public does require cognitive focus and attention. This research explored transparency and skill building but meditation exercises could be used in future research to fine tune attention.

I think it's about developing the capacity to observe the choices you make. To observe how you respond to me when we are interacting, to observe the group... it's like when you are in a life-or-death situation where everything slows down... How can you, in a sense, capitalize on that? Get things to stay so present that things seem to slow down, and you can see everything going on, get the bigger picture of things. So, that capacity to observe and to pay attention, because your attention is like a dance. It's moving all the time. The movement of my attention. The observation of what is going on in the room and what is going on inside... there's all these layers. (Harwood & Flynn, 2019)

In this research however, the open structure was seen at times by the dancers as a lack of clear choice making, rather than an intentional creative choice. As in the physical training results, the strategies used for improvisation were almost too familiar to the dancers and they didn't necessarily realize how the scores practiced over 2 months had significantly defined qualitative and compositional parameters of the creation. This strategy for creation and its impact needed to be clarified to the dancers, as well as their freedom to explore or stick to set structures. *Periodization* has been used as a phasal method to build strength in athletes aligned with their competition goals. The goal of the work was to empower the dancers to adapt the structure we had researched to their performance in the moment and to be unphased by changes in context or their choices. Vealey's study looked at ways that athlete's confidence can be build up prior to competition and dealt with the psychological aspects of performance and less in quantitative measures of chemical compounds and more aligned with the approach taken in my research.

So, developmental confidence is enhanced by having confidence in one's abilities from a growth mindset perspective, and particularly that performance is the result of acquirable skills. However, this doesn't happen automatically. Developmental confidence means that athletes believe that they can sustain the effort required to convert their potential into proficient performance. This is often viewed more simply as motivation, but athletes often describe it as a lack of belief in their ability to work hard enough to do it. They just don't believe it is possible or that they can do it. In this sense, it is a lack of developmental confidence. Along with being confident about acquiring skills, developmental confidence also involves being confident about withstanding failure. The ability to cope adaptively with failure is an important aspect of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). (Vealey, 2019, p. 34)

There is also a type of resiliency around learning and being willing to fail that allows for risk and confidence in choice making. Limiting choices is one option, but also having opportunities to practice taking chances and standing by them is another. Since we were not allowed to invite other people to rehearsals or do small showing building up to performances because of pandemic restrictions the dancers had few opportunities to practice complex choice making while being observed.

Building confidence in the periodization approach "enhances performance by influencing athletes' thinking, feelings, decision-making, effort, and persistence (Vealey & Chase, 2008). A periodization approach to building confidence involves helping athletes move through the sequential phases of developmental, preparatory, and performance confidence that lead into Execution Mode just prior to and during the competitive event (see Figure 1). An evaluation phase after the event is then assimilated into the process of developmental confidence to continue the periodization cycle." (Vealey, 2019, pp. 26-27)

Under different circumstances, opportunities to rehearse in front of small audiences while editing and refining the piece would be worthwhile to build dancers confidence in open work in contexts that progressively build up to performance in front of audiences, as well as gathering information after performances, to further learning, as was done in this research action/creation.

Periodizing an approach to wellbeing and confidence was another important finding of this research creation. Dancers' feelings around their work directly affected their performance. More attention and knowledge in this area would be beneficial. A study in *Research and Dance Education* by Klockare, Gustafsson & Nordin-Bates in 2011, followed six dance teachers implementing PST (Psychological Skills Training) such as goal setting and using imagery with their students, showed that this aspect that is vital to optimal performance is rarely taught to dance pedagogues or choreographers. "The results revealed that all teachers have had very little or no education in performance psychology." (Klockare, Gustafsson & Nordin-Bates, 2011, p.291). Approches to coaching and teaching in dance tend to be critical and we need to spend more energy on developing and applying constructive feedback in our interventions.

5.6 Communication & Self-Reflective Processes

Communication was key to the application of Periodization, Devising and conducting a Research Action. Gathering information through questionnaires and initial assessments for this research also provided important information about dancers' state for physical and psychological periodization. Creating space for people to share their experiences during rehearsals informed rehearsal activities and also made for an authentic workplace that built trust and a safe space for vulnerability and trying new things in terms of generating material for devising.

The first tension is between divergence and coherence, which is to say between the interpretative openness that comes from a multiplicity of voices and visions and the need to shape these into a coherent theatrical experience. The second tension is between the need for trust, openness and free flowing communication between participants in devising processes and the fact that the process itself can produce anxiety and insecurity...My key point is that a creative process based around human interactions should take account for the full scope of human emotions that feed into it. (Smart 2014, 102)

Hearing dancers' feedback about the training and choreography through the process, created an adaptive feedback loop that improved the evolution and timing of activities. This relational and humanistic approach resonates with the integration of communication into the research process. The dancers expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to be honest about their physical and mental state and how

their feedback influenced the work during the process and the interviews at the end of the project. As stated earlier it also gave them a window into everyone's state.

Both the academic and artistic research benefitted from the knowledge and experience informing the dancers and dramaturge's ideas in terms of problem solving, innovation and deep sensitivity in the work. This article looking into Sustainability in Coaching by Rynne and Mallet 2014 articulates the multiple tasks coaches undertake when training athletes and how when integrating the concept of sustainability into praxis seeing optimal performance and overall care for the individual's continuing growth are connected.

High performance coaches assume roles related to hands-on coaching in training and competition settings, planning and coordination of athlete development processes, logistical and technical support, pastoral care and management of constraints (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995; Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2006; Lyle, 2002; MacLean & Chelladurai, 1995; Rynne & Mallett, 2012). In undertaking this work, quality high performance coaches have been shown to be central to athlete development and performance (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002; Starkes & Ericsson, 2003). Despite the generally narrow conceptualization of the coach's influence on performance, there are regular accounts of high-performance coaching that are more humanistic in nature. In these cases it has been shown that coaches may also have a role to play in the broader empowerment of the athlete towards achieving personal goals through a facilitative interpersonal relationship (Cassidy, 2010; Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2004; Lyle, 2002). So, a key point in relation to the issue of sustainability in high performance sport is that the coach is a potentially influential figure with regard to athletic performance and holistic development. (Rynne & Mallet, 2014, p. 4)

5.7 Research Action Effects

Since this project was conducted as a *Research Action*, sharing my questions connected everyone with the intentions of the work and created opportunities for new perspectives from experienced professionals to reframe and advance questions I have spent years contemplating. My supervisor, Nicole Harbonnier, has a vast knowledge of dance research, neurophysiology, sport, education, and movement analysis, and I have benefitted enormously from her counsel throughout the development of this project and my time in the master's program. Professor Andre Martin's insights into aesthetics, especially in relational art and western philosophy's relationship to the body greatly impacted my point of view initiating this project. Using the format of a Research Action methodology allowed what was expressed through authentic communication to feed back into the process. The research actions such as recorded check-ins, questionnaires, discussions, and interviews made our time together intentional and transformational.

The transparency in conversations during the research created opportunities for us all to learn from each other's opinions, experiences, ways of being and physical embodiment. In Rynne and Mallet's research into how coaches of elite athletes learn on the job and implementing sustainability, they found that exchanging with peers about constructive practices was key to progressing. (Rynne & Mallet 2014, p. 2). The very act of listening to each other also created space for dancers to hear themselves, generating self-reflection and integration of their experience. Melina observed a phenomenon that she had experienced in other open-ended projects where elements get worked on without you being aware of it. This almost invisible process of integration was apparent to her because of the ongoing dialogue with Mairéad, Brianna & I.

The two streams to the dialogue around recuperation and artistic research made her aware of how the piece was progressing on multiple levels. The dancers' meta-awareness of the project goals, beyond their own performances, created a collaborative project between us and undid some of the hierarchy of a dance creation. This type of co-creation echoes Laurence Halprin's (1969) collaborative design model the RSVP cycles. Inspired by scoring his wife Anna's dance creations he used the template to create collaborative architectural projects that brought together differing subjective perspectives to solve design problems.

In watching rehearsal videos and rereading journal entries, the many and varied experiences and insights of the dancers and dramaturge, have been extremely useful in guiding the development and actualization of the research. Mairéad Filgate is a successful dancer and choreographer and has 15 years of experience navigating collective creation as a founding member of the Throw Down Collective. Mairead's questions around collaboration, choreographic intent, timing and structure brought clarity to the phrases. The theoretical research affirmed Mairead's own experiential knowledge accumulated over years of practice, and the value she places in putting theory into action to truly understand its applications. Having worked together before, Mairéad is starting to understand me and I her, and how our differences affect our working together. My tendency to have many ideas, her desire to dive deep into a few. So, her recommendations on how the piece could be developed in the future make sense in this context.

There are a lot of interesting elements that were brought forward that there was not time to explore or maybe there were too many ideas to be able to explore: costume ideas, ideas around different sites, maybe outdoor and melding live music with the piece. To me those things are interesting, and rather than opening too much more physical exploration, I think trying some of those other elements could make the work more whole and integrated, could bring a lot to it. Erin talked to other collaborators: costume people, makeup, and things like that would be worth

diving into. I would try to keep them all (warmups, improvisations, group discussions, video watching altogether), the consistency of all those things is important, just keep the focus strong. There are so many ideas floating, that just paring down, not cutting everything away, because it's great to imagine many things, but maybe a little bit less, so that there's like a practical, realistic sense of what can get done, you know? To just hone in on: what's the goal and image of the work? What is important, what's being prioritized? So that would be my recommendation. (Mairéad, 34:53)

The honesty in this testimony shows that Mairéad feels comfortable giving an unfiltered account of her experience; and that she appreciated that I would listen to her interview and that space had been created inside of the process for many of the things to be discussed. In her experience, being interviewed after a creative process is rare, if not unique and she seemed to appreciate of being offered the space to authentically share and reflect on wonderful and challenging aspects of the experience.

Melina Stinson, an active professional dancer, singer, actor who also teaches a preparatory mix of Somatics, Pilates and conditioning to pre-professionals at EDCM, as well as adult populations, making her feedback around the training approach and its relationship to the artistic work invaluable. Both dancers desire for more repetition brought to light the importance of bringing memory work into training, and pre-show preparations. To the question of how to keep somatic explorations going in front of audiences, Melina suggested bringing in observers during Praxis training sessions to get dancers comfortable being watched while exploring subtle somatic states. As already noted, she also had specific recommendations based on her experience as a dancer and trainer for ways in which periodization could be taken further with individualized programs that pushed dancers further physically and that could do on their own time, without adding more rehearsals.

I also learned, something that I've learned or experienced in many different processes, but that things get worked on without you knowing that they're getting worked on. You know? Which is a kind of surprise each time. It's so present in projects where there is some freedom, I think. There's this visible field of work and then there's the other field that is unknown. And we don't know at what point in the process we pass from one to the other, or where our path will lead or end. We don't know what will be revealed or what will be created...I think that I learned again about this magic thing, but in more depth, because I was able to examine it along with Erin, Mairéad and Briana too. (Melina, 52:30)

5.8 Dancer Feedback

Here are the dancers recommendation based on the strategies used during the 6-week generative phase of *Iterations*, that can be applied to subsequent phases of editing, refinement and preproduction:

Generative phase, reiterating the role of each phase would help.
Incorporating more repetition of phrases in the warmup and practicing/familiarizing dancers with dynamic and cues while improvising.
Edit, remove excess ideas in order to focus and leave more time for editing and refining.
Solidify structure, cues and set phrase. Leave time for adjustments
Push harder physically prior to sharing. Run sections together so that stamina is adequately prepared for on filming/performance days.
Develop supporting ideas such as costumes, make-up, locations and practice with them.
Increasing <i>marking</i> when a rest is needed (Kirsh)
Bringing in new people: collaborators & organise small showings to have new energy infuse the project. Illuminate what needs to be clarified for dancers and choreographer, and create goals and positive pressure/time constraints. Do this gradually to not sacrifice trust, safe space or well-being.
Allow for time and the process of each dancer and the choreographer to develop an internal sense of the dynamic, physical and emotional arcs in the work as the order comes together.
Funding for paid rest times & personalized training routines to create surplus of strength & stamina.
Continuing to use video to create objectivity, respite and common ground, and discussions to check in, create self and group awareness, and clarify goals.

Table 5-2 Dancer Recommendations

5.9 Recommendations for Creative Aspects for Future Projects

- Consider the placement on the observer, and the experience you are trying to create for audiences.
- Longer process with time for additional phases of creation to define, refine sections and apply dancers' recommendations and transition into and out of performance.
- Technical residencies to absorb change of scene, integrate technical aspects, prepare to share the work, adapt to a different schedule and environment.
- Incorporate restorative practices, to supplement preparatory ones.
- Testing inclusion of training inside of rehearsals for pre-existing repertoire would facilitate the process of Artistic Periodization.

CONCLUSION

In this preliminary investigation of Sustainable Artistic Periodization via Research Action, the combination of process and goal-oriented focus struck an important balance that bears further study in future editing, preproduction, and performance phases. Particularly the affordances created by the community support and self-reflective aspects buoyed dancers in humanistic ways.

This master's research has allowed me to articulate a problem, contextualise my work and assemble potential solutions. I have conducted a pre-study and my preliminary findings indicate the benefits of training and communication for embodied performance and dancers' wellbeing. The challenges of applying modulation in a dance creation context involved directing complex aspects of a project towards undetermined goals. To further develop these tools it would be important to test them over a longer period that includes different phases of creation and public presentation. This process would likely require adapting the tools used to redefine goals in order to support dancers and choreographic work in production and performance. My recommendations for future research would be to propose more specific and challenging individualised and group training and aim to have showings, share documentation, incorporate collaborators, find funding for rest, administrative and artistic support for the entire team. A technical residency, prior to performances is another important element for mitigating production pressures this research only barely encountered. Time outside of rehearsals to discuss themes, aesthetics and problem solve around the challenges of dismantling or working within internalised perfectionism, workaholism and hierarchies could also prove beneficial.

We are firm believers that limitations create freedoms and breed creativity. We are certainly not for the suffering of the artist. Asking performers to improvise in a void can be counterproductive. It is the pain of personal experience that has shaped this approach as well as the influence and approaches of the very talented choreographers we have worked with. They recognized the need to simplify things for us. We responded to their use of rules and parameters and have taken this process on as our own (Graham & Hogget, 2009, p. 6)

Physical and verbal clarity in communication is challenging but worthwhile goals inside of process, as is receptivity and integration. This research points toward a path that values process as much as product and the artists within both most of all. Learning to pass through the different stages of creation and respond to what each phase needs in strategic and intuitive ways is a worthwhile exercise in community building, art making and generating models of cooperation. Respecting the integrity of the body, the spirit and the

interconnections that generate our art can yield outcomes beyond performances. Letting the knowledge of sensation sink deeper into the structures we use to generate and organise contemporary dance in authentic, holistic, and clear ways yields space for learning, experimenting, rest, reflection, integration, communication, and embodied sharing.

This research bore strong, nuanced, complex and striking interpretive performances from the dancers. The modulating schedule prevented the momentum of creation from draining and injuring the artists, and the openness to chance in the process left space for a piece to emerge that was the greater than the sum of our individual identities, generating living performances rather than representational ones. No one was going through the motions, empty of awareness, energy or inspiration. The incorporation of recuperation and progressive training prevented the art from exploiting the biological, while the artistic research kept the physicality from becoming instrumentalized and stale. The combination of these two methods created a symbiosis between structure and content, and the time for receptivity, integration and recuperation created space for invisible processes beyond our conscious control to occur. Pre-liminary research into sustainable artistic periodization points to ways that nurturing resources and sharing practices can generate resilient interdependence and revelatory experiences inside of a dance creation process.

ANNEXE A

QUESTIONNAIRE PRIOR TO RESEARCH

1. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being rarely and 5 being daily, how often do you do the following types of training?
 - a) Contemporary dance class – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - b) Somatic Class, ex. Feldenkrais, Yoga, Tai Chi or Gyrotonic – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - c) Conditioning exercises, ex. Pilates or Fitness training – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - d) Cardio-vascular training, ex. Running, biking, walking, swimming at a rate that elevates your heart rate. – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - e) Improvisation – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5Do you have anything to add?

2. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being tolerate and 5 being enjoy, what methods do you prefer using in dance creation?
 - a) Learning phrases – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - b) Learning material from video – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - c) Being given open ideas to explore – 1 – 2 – 3- 4 – 5
 - d) Being given specific parameters to explore – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - e) Deconstructing existing ideas – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - f) Playing games or interacting with other dancers – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - g) Having conversations about ideas – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - h) Using an existing art object as a point of departure – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - i) Getting notes and directions on how to perform a task – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
 - j) Repeating movement sections to improve performance – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Do you have anything to add?

3. In past processes you have participated in have you experienced frustration or fatigue using any of the following methods? 1 being rarely and 5 being often

- a) Learning phrases from a choreographer or other dancer – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- b) Learning material from video – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- c) Being given open ideas to explore – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- d) Being given specific parameters to explore – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- e) Deconstructing existing ideas – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- f) Playing games or interacting with other dancers – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- g) Having conversations about ideas – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- h) Using an existing art object as a point of departure – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- i) Getting notes and directions on how to perform a task – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- j) Repeating movement sections to improve performance – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

What strategies do you think could have improved the situation?

4. Going into performances, have you ever felt: 1 being rarely and 5 being often

- a) Tired – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- b) Confident – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- c) Excited – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- d) Injured – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- e) Unprepared – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- f) Loss of Confidence – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- g) Rested – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- h) Prepared – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- i) Confident – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
- j) Dread – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

5. What conditions do you think could have improved the situation?

6. What do you consider important aspects for instilling trust in a rehearsal process?

7. How would you describe your personal aesthetic preferences?

8. How would you describe your personal training preferences?

9. Would you say you are a visual, kinesthetic, auditive or other style of learner?

•

ANNEXE B

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. How did training cardiovascular impact your stamina?
2. What impact did training together have on your own experience of creating the work?
3. How do you think training together impacted the process?
4. What kind of challenges arose from adding cardio training and a shared practice?
5. How did you find working with a modulating schedule? Have two phases of creation?
6. What impact did tracking your physiological and psychological wellbeing have on you?
7. How did you find sharing the material in the workshop and performances?
8. Did group video watching clarify intentions? Provide physical respite?
9. Did you find the group discussions productive? Did you feel heard?
10. How did you find the use of Tapering prior to performance, affect your physicality in performance?
Psychologically in performance?
11. What was the impact of having time to recuperate during rehearsals?
12. What have you learned from this experience?
13. What are your recommendations?

ANNEXE C

ITERATIONS – PERIODIZED SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Studio
mercredi le 14 juillet	13h-16h30 (3.5) = pre-étude/ evaluation:	4115
jeudi le 15 juillet	14h-16h30 (2.5) = pre-étude/ evaluation:	4115
mardi le 13 octobre	Melina 11:45-2:15	4115
mercredi le 14 octobre	13h-16h30 (3.5) =dancers start @ 2:30	sous-sol
jeudi le 15 octobre	14h-16h30 (2.5)	4115
vendredi le 16 octobre	14h - 18 (4) = Mairead 2-4:30	4115
lundi 19 octobre	12-15h30, (3.5)	4115
mercredi 21 octobre	3h-16h30, (3.5)	sous-sol
jeudi 22 octobre	13h30- 16h (3.5) = Erin	4115
vendredi 23 octobre	de 14h-18h (4)	4115
lundi 26 octobre	12-15h30, (3.5)	4115
mardi 27 octobre	9h45 à 13h15 (3.5)	sous-sol
mercredi 28 octobre	13h-16h30, (3.5)	sous-sol
jeudi 29 octobre	13h30- 16h, (3.5) = Erin	4115
vendredi 30 octobre	14h-18h (4) enregistrement avec costume/musique	4115
lundi 2 novembre	12-15h30, (3.5) = Erin	4115
mercredi 4 novembre	13h30-16h30, (3.5) = Erin	sous-sol
jeudi 5 novembre	13h30 à 16h30, (3.5) de = Erin	4115
vendredi 6 novembre	14h-18h (4) de = Erin	4115
lundi 9 novembre	12-15h30, (3.5)	4115
mardi 10 novembre	9h45 à 13h15, (3.5)	sous-sol
mercredi 11 novembre	13h-16h30 (3.5)	sous-sol
jeudi 12 novembre	13h30- 16h, (3.5) = Erin	4115
vendredi 13 novembre	14h-18h (4)	4115
lundi 16 novembre	12-15h30, (3.5)	4115
mardi 17 novembre	11-14h30, (3.5)	sous-sol
mercredi 18 novembre	3h-16h30 (3.5)	4115
jeudi 19 novembre	13h30- 16h, (3.5) = Erin	4115
vendredi 20 novembre	13h-17h (3)	4115
samedi le 21 novembre	10h-16h30 (6.5) tournage	4115
lundi 23 novembre	12-15h30 (3.5)	4115
mercredi 25 novembre		
jeudi 26 novembre	18h-22h (4)	1150
vendredi 27 novembre	11h-18h (7) tournage	1150

ANNEXE D
VIDEO DOCUMENTATION OF FINAL PERFORMANCE

<https://vimeo.com/650888063/622fc81026>

<https://vimeo.com/650904254/0a3ebc89db>

<https://vimeo.com/650885970>

ANNEXE E
BIBLIOGRAPHIE ANNOTÉE

1. G. Andrade (2015). *Corpographies en Danse, Les traces du corps dans l'espace, Le Corps en Question*, l'Harmattan, 5-7, rue de l'Ecole-Polytechnique, 75005 Paris

Basing her insights on Labanian Movement Analysis, Graziela Andrade is interested in Corpography and Gestuality; the choreographies that are intrinsic to our very being as a result of our lived experience. The ways in which events in our development are internalised and transformed into symbolic meanings that are housed within the flesh and then actualised as gestures in space. Layers of distinct information contained and mixed within bodies, retaining the distinctness of the individual's experience and thus movement qualities, but translated into open, common systems through everyday gestures others can understand. (Andrade 2015, p.121). Andrade's ideas are relevant to my research because they recognise the 'foundation' of physical experience that exists within each individual, as well as the ways in which everyday movements and gestures contain meaning that can resonate within the commons. This part of the spectrum of movement is worth investigating choreographically because it is source material rich in unique meaning, while also relatable to observers. Connects to the notions of Enaction, Cognition, the Haptic Sense, Fond – that we are formed by our movements in the world. (Batson & Wilson 2015, Noland, Loureiro, Harbonnier & Dussault, Laban, Merleau-Ponty, Bernard, Godard, Stuart, etc.)

2. Batson, G. & Wilson, M. (2014). *Body and Mind in Motion, Intellect*, The University of Chicago Press

In *Body and Mind in Motion*, Glenna Batson and Margaret Wilson examine the notion of Embodied Cognition. The authors who are academically positioned at the intersection of Dance Science and Somatic Education, weave together interdisciplinary quantitative research from the fields of Neuroscience, Dance Science and Ecology with knowledge gleaned from the qualitative, subjective understanding of Phenomenology, Psychology and Somatic Education. Wilson and Batson (2014, p. 41) begin their book by referencing Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi's *The Phenomenological Mind* (2012) to identify changes in paradigms that laid the foundation for the emergence of Cognitive Science. At its root, *Cognition* stems from the notion of auto-poiesis that 'there is no pre-ordained reality but rather one that is brought forth by living organisms.' This perspective translates into post-modern shifts away from positivism in scientific research and formalism in dance, and towards process-oriented research that places

embodiment and the physical interactions of organisms with their environment at the center of understanding, challenging the assumptions of the western, dualistic perspective of the mind dominating the body.

The scientific study of consciousness that delves in to the nature of first-person experience and inter-subjectivity connected Cognitive Science to Phenomenology, (Chalmers 1995, Johnson 2008, Gallagher and Zahavi 2012, Thompson 2001) and built on brain mapping technologies evolved in the 1990's – that lead to theories on Neuroplasticity and Mirror neurons. The evolution and integration of Complexity and Dynamic systems theory in ecological psychology (Gibson affordances) and Learning and Development theory all played a role in the emergence of a new holistic scientific understanding of Cognition as the 'dynamic coupling of brain, body, and environment' (Stafford 2011, 31).

Viewing reality as a co-creation, rather than a function if isolated neural processes is explored by Varela, Thompson and Rosch 1991, and supported by the work of (Sheets-Johnstone 2009, Berthoz 2000, Doidge 2007, Noe 2007, Damasio 2012), who showed that brain capacities evolved from movement rather than vice versa (Batson and Wilson 2014, 41). After establishing it's roots, Batson and Wilson then proceed to use Cognition as a lens for examining the impact of Somatics on changing Contemporary dance practices in training and creation from the late twentieth century to the present.

3. Bernard, M. (1993). Sens et fiction ou les effets étranges de trois chiasmes sensoriels, *Nouvelles de danse*, no. 17, p. 56-64, ISSN 0778-9580

In this article, Michel Bernard, uses Merleau-Ponty's posthumously published last work, *The Visible and Invisible* (Merleau-Ponty, 1964) as his point of departure. In this work Ponty introduces the concept of the chiasm, or the inherent duplicity in all experience. Bernard applies the idea aesthetically and argues that the articulation of sensation can form the basis of all dance making, « le concept de chiasme, pour montrer ce qu'il peut apporter à la danse, en l'articulant avec une théorie qui m'est totalement propre, la théorie du mécanisme énonciatif de l'acte de sentir, et de même coup, de son pouvoir de production de fiction. » (Bernard 93, p.57). Bernard references Maldiney's reflections on Strauss theories that a felt moment 'met à nu le ressentir dans le sentir', that flesh is simultaneously sentient and sensorial. His three categories for the experience of sensation are as follows:

1st chiasm - Intra-sensorial: Inside every sensation contains both an active and passive aspect, creating a feedback loop between action and reception, the location of sensation and the place from which we seek it (Bernard, 1993, p.80). « Je suis toujours double, [...] comme une multiplicité de fictions, de simulacres qui entourent chaque sensation. » (Bernard, 1993, p.62).

2nd chiasm - Inter-sensorial: Multiple and auto-reflexive corporality where each sense contains an aspect of another, ex. An eye can listen, an ear can see. The sum total is bigger than the combination of all biological sensations. « Dans chaque sens, il y a l'habitation et d'une certaine façon, le redoublement de l'effet d'un autre sens. Et donc une certaine confirmation de toute cette théorie de la simulation, de la production de fiction à l'intérieur du système sensoriel. » (Bernard, 1993, p.63)

3rd chiasm: Para-sensorial – the intermediary connecting sensation and action, the enunciation within sensation and the articulation which results. « Mais nous, dans notre recherche dans la danse, c'est de savoir si notre sensation (notre mouvement) fonctionne de la même façon que l'acte de parler ou d'écrire. » (Bernard 93, p. 59). The communication of inner experience as embodied by Wigman, Duncan, Graham etc. « L'acte de projection fonde l'acte d'énonciation qui fonctionne à l'intérieur même de la sensation. » (Bernard 93, p.60)

Bernard asserts that our creativity and capacity for invention resides within our sensation and that to generate dance we need little else if we explore this aspect fully. The fact that imagination resides within the articulation of our sensations, is the engine for expression in dance (Bernard 93, pp.61). Since sensation arises in the process of simulation, it is virtually doubled at every level of our sensorial system. (Bernard 93, pp.62). « La danse ...est un dynamique de métamorphose indéfinité, de tissage de la temporalité que s'effectue à l'intérieure d'un dialogue avec la gravitation. » (Bernard 93, p. 63).

« Le travail sensoriel multiple du danseur porte en lui-même une fiction originaire qu'il pourrait très bien se contenter d'exploiter ...il suffit qu'il travaille fondamentalement sur ce qu'il produit par sa propre sensorialité. Car, que désigne ce qu'on appelle habituellement la musicalité, la théâtralité, l'expressivité du mouvement dansé. Le lien imaginaire qu'il y a entre la sensation et l'imaginaire, mais rabattu sur la dimension rythmique quand il s'agit de musique, sur la distorsion qui entre dans le jeu spéculaire immanent au théâtre, quand il s'agit de théâtralité, ou sur la dynamique pulsionnelle et affective qui parcourt le mouvement dansé, quand il s'agit de l'expressivité. » (Bernard 93, p. 64).

4. Bienaise, J. (2008). *Présence à soi et présence scénique en danse contemporaine : expérience de quatre danseuses et onze spectateurs dans une représentation de la pièce The Shallow End* (M. en danse, Université du Québec à Montréal). Consulté à l'adresse [http : //www. archipel.uqam.ca](http://www.archipel.uqam.ca).

The memoir of Johanna Bienaise examines interpretation from the point of view of four dancers performing a work in progress of my piece, *The Shallow End*, as well as the audience's reactions to it. Bienaise's analysis identifies the challenges of performing choreographic work that has both set and improvised material, highlighting individual preferences, as well as the need for a variety of activities to forge common ground between distinct individuals. Where some dancers were preoccupied with the technical demands of choreographic phrases and wanted attention to be paid to building the strength, coordination and intention behind the movement, others struggled with the multiplicity of improvisational tasks and freedom afforded them. With this work I was interested in showing the many layers of personas that exist with individual women and the resulting struggle to live up to, many (sometimes opposing) goals all at once. I deliberately gave the dancers an impossible series of tasks, without revealing that the aesthetic goal was to show the struggle, rather than succeed at the impossible. In retrospect, perhaps I could have communicated my goals to the performers. I only discovered years later after reading this thesis the opinions of the dancers regarding some of my artistic, musical and staging choices. There are many important insights contained in this thesis, but because of my unique involvement in the project, what stands out for me is the need for everyone's voice to be heard through the creation process and the need for structures to support constructive exchange. My research, tests strategies for addressing all the need for technical and improvisational preparation and open dialogue around aesthetic and theatrical choices highlighted in this overview of Bienaise's research.

5. Buckroyd, J. (2000). *The Student Dancer, Emotional Aspects of the Teaching and Learning in Dance*, London, England: Dance Books Ltd.

Julia Buckroyd is a counsellor for dance students attending professional dance training institutions in England. In this book, she addresses the dance teacher as a facilitator for psychological and emotional development, as well as for learning practices of dance, rather than the technical content of what is being taught. She

observes patterns that have a negative impact on students' psychological wellbeing and makes recommendations for changes in teaching styles to address her critiques. Some notable suggestions are for teachers to work with smaller groups and maintain an awareness of group dynamics and encourage non-hierarchical learning and support within groups, as well as encouraging to students to cultivate autonomy, agency and self-discipline, instead of imposing conformity through authority. She also recommends that teachers create a positive learning environment and share their knowledge and feedback in constructive ways by paying attention to their use of language and keeping the ratio of positive to negative comments (4:1). At present, "there is evidence to suggest that professional dance trainees may experience a lowering of self-esteem as a result of training. This is worrying especially because of the lack of self-care which seems to be a common result." (Buckroyd 2000, 200). If Buckroyd's proposals were heeded they could have a profound effect on the culture dance education in many learning and professional institutions.

6. Chopin, M.P. (2015). *Pédagogues de la danse, Transmission des savoirs et champ chorégraphiques*, Paris, France: Éditions Fabert

This book investigates the pedagogical techniques employed in the choreographic process. Chopin interviews eight practitioners with a variety of backgrounds and ages, including interpreters, teachers and choreographers. She also considers the careers and writings of several influential figures in the development of modern and contemporary dance, focusing on their conceptions of dance and the strategies they employed to transmit them. The analysis of the interviews and historical research are used to create the following teacher profiles.

7. Colapietro, Vincent (2006) *Practice, Agency, & Sociality: An Orthogonal Reading of Classical Pragmatism*, The Pennsylvania State University

A review of American pragmatism and influential social philosophers that influenced the development of this line of thinking for future social change.

8. Cools, G. (2016). *In-between Dance Cultures: On the Migratory Artistic Identity of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan*, Amsterdam:Valiz/Antennae Series, ISBN 9789492095114

Key words: Frontiers, Somatic awareness, Hybrid, Receptivity, Frontiers, Influences, Identity, Environmental awareness (in reference to culture, natural and urban environments).

To be embodied is to participate in a migration from one body form to another. Each of us is a nomad, a wave that has duration for a time and then takes on a new somatic shape. This perpetual transformation is the subject of all myth. (Cools 2015, 14 Abram, David, 1996)

In this book, curator, author and dramaturge Guy Cools, explores the multiple influences of choreographers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan. Having worked with both artists as a dramaturge, he explores the questions around culture and belonging, raised by their multiple cultural identities both in their individual artistic practices, as well as citizens of the world. Cools raises many interesting points throughout the book, among them is the notion of receptivity as a quality of awareness cultivated by somatic practices, as well as a philosophic and ecological perspective that could offset current dominant patterns of idealising action without considering repercussions.

This book traces phenomena occurring within the context of contemporary dance creation and looks at its broader societal implications. Cools states that “The contemporary dancer’s somatic awareness and knowledge of the body is a starting point.” (Cools 2017, 14). The evolution of individuals, artistic styles and art forms involves travel across permeable borders, quoting Salmon Rushdie’s “Freedom to move across frontiers.” (Cools, Rushdie). He investigates stylistic frontiers and discusses how techniques can play a role in configuring our aesthetic lens, as they are composed not only of movements but also contain values and ways of thinking that can inform choice making, referring to how Berthoz thoughts on the configuration of information and coordination patterns, techniques are made up of these. Borders between techniques are also often artificial, tribal or cultural, as there is always contamination and hybrid combinations. Cools references Daniel Sibony’s discussion of what it is to be in between, Amin Matouf’s investigation into multiple identities, as well as Stanley Keleman’s take on myth and the body. “Sibony is a dance aficionado as well as a philosopher and psychoanalyst. In his book *Le corps et sa danse* (1995), he uses his notion of the in-between to offer one of the most pertinent definitions of dance. He defines dance as a movement in-between two bodies: a *corps-mémoire* (body-memory) and a *corps-actuel* (body-present). The passageway from one to the other, which always takes place in both directions at the same time.” (Cools 2017, 40)

9. DeJaco, V. (2018). Florentina Holzinger: "The Dancer's Body Being Exhibited always as a sexual object". (18/13c) Vienna, Austria: Spike Art Quarterly

In this article, Victoria DeJaco interviews renegade choreographer Florentina Holzinger about her creation process. Holzinger shares how she chooses and collaborates with her dancers, as well as her observations and reactions to norms within the European contemporary dance milieu in 2018. Her observations on the inequality and sexual pressures faced by female dancers are very timely and on point given the emergence of the #metoo movement in popular culture, as well as theatre and dance milieus since the end of 2017.

10. Dumont, A., Kadel, N. Brunet, N. Colombié, J.B., Lewton Brain, P. et Coulandre, A. (2016) *Danse et Santé*, ScienceDirect, Elsevier; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.scispo.2016.06.002>

This article is based on the perspective that dancers as artistic athletes facing unique and complex physical and psychological demands need specialists trained to work with them specifically. This text contains an overview of the current state of research in emerging field of in to Dance Science, as well as interviews with both classical and contemporary dancers, as well as one dance teacher on practices relating to dancers' health. Although dance is physical, its subjective and expressive nature and the complexity of the biomechanical tasks make it difficult to evaluate and follow dancers health. The nature of the movements they will perform is irregular, inconsistent and difficult to plan for in comparison to runner or athlete with a specific event. The article looks at the need for specialists that can understand the combination of expressive/social and biomechanical/movement skills, as well as health care practitioners who can care the physiological and psychological challenges inherent in the profession. The independent status of today's dancers means that the majority are not privileged to have a daily company class or have health or sports specialists follow them. Dancers activities are often varied and include that roles of dancer, choreographer and teacher. Changing routines between classes, rehearsals and performances also make it difficult to measure the demands of activities. " Un suivi regulier et travail adapté en fonction des exigences d'une pièce est donc peu frequent" (3) Preparation is often missing from the vocabulary of dancers, and they often seek out somatic education or the help of a physiotherapist or kinesiologist only to treat urgent symptoms/situations, rather than working with a holistic preventative program that addresses their specific physical needs and training them for specific current projects. For example, dancers tend to have extreme range of motion in their hips and ankles. Less than optimal physical condition and alignment and fatigue tend to be responsible for injuries.

The article concludes that when there is an institution or over arching structure in place, more direct actions can be taken in terms of training. The pre-professional and professional worlds of dance can take in to account a global picture of what is being asked of dancers, as fatigue is often largely responsible for injury and needs to be addressed from several fronts. The complex coordination patterns also make evaluating fatigue more challenging but a first step would be using for schools and practitioners to develop and use evaluative tests that have a scientific basis and to push towards a certification for clinicians that are familiar and adept at working with dancers.

Finally the impact of economic precarity and the prevalent culture of perfectionism in the dance world have on the individual's overall well-being is not to be underestimated. Education around proper nutrition, nurturing self-esteem and creating routines that incorporates rest and training, as well as a capacity for adaptation would be important programs to implement ensure professional survival and success. The integration of somatic education into training programs and dancers practices has helped bring awareness and the capacity to self-correct to dancers individual practices. However elements that are not directly under dancers control such as creating healthy working environments and designing schedules and rehearsal practices that don't push people to the point of exhaustion, also need to be incorporated into working practices and considered by the people in control of schools and productions. The information explored in this article is extremely informative and relevant for my project where the idea being tested is an optimization of dancers capacities based on both subjective observations and the collection of quantitative data.

11. Ferré, J. et Leroux, Ph. (1996) Préparation aux Brevets d'État d'Éducateur Sportif, bases physiologiques de l'entraînement, Tome 1, Paris: Éditions Amphora.

This book by Jean Ferré and Bernard Philippe is the first of two books designed for physical educators. Its uses a holistic approach for designing training programs, taking into account the many facets of the human organism from the basic cellular structures and building outwards towards. The book begins with an overview of the history of systems theory and the basics of biology. It goes on to look at the constituents influencing the relationship between effort and recuperation. Individual chapters break down the mechanisms of the regulatory and nervous systems, progressing to the bio-mechanical and motor functions as they relate to the musculature, skeleton and joints and finally the respiratory, circulatory, digestive and excretive systems. Finally covering the facets to consider in performance optimisation: from

strength, speed, endurance, flexibility and coordination. Evaluative tests. Finally covering the physiological basics of training and the corollary elements to consider, such as: nutrition, fatigue and global preparations for competition.

12. Fortin, S., Long, W. and Lord, M. (2002). Three Voices: Researching how somatic education informs contemporary dance technique classes, *Research in Dance Education*, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, London & New York. ISSN: 1464-7893

Sylvie Fortin, Warwick Long and Madelaine Lord, three researchers who all taught at UQÀM in the late nineties and early 2000's authored this study, asking the following questions:

- How do teachers integrate Somatics into contemporary dance technique classes?
- How is movement awareness facilitated in the dance classes informed by Somatics?
- How are 'dancing bodies' constructed in the dance classes informed by Somatics?

The observation is in this article that University and dance education programs having been hoping that students will make the connections themselves between somatic education and technique classes, but that their research points to a need for a more deliberate intention to realise this goal. In light of this fact, best practices for dealing with the *continuum of retention, integration and transfer* of cognitive and motor processes (Fortin, Long & Warwick 2002, 160) a concept needs to be articulated explicitly by the teacher and related to previous experience when a task is first presented and executed, as well as when the idea is seen again in more complex context. Other strategies for facilitating the integration of sensory motor information are to encourage awareness of sensation and create opportunities to examine it through repetition and exploration while highlighting attention to personal sensation as a learning goal throughout the process. This can be achieved by encouraging personal responsibility and problem solving and aided by the teacher describing their own thought process and physical experience. It's noted that there is not a lot of research in dance education on transference and integration (Welsh 2000).

Long and Fortin's teaching methods favour outlining the goals explicitly while teaching in order to help integrate the knowledge to long term memory, making for easier identification and retrieval in the moment of trying to produce a movement. They also include methods that promote sensory motor awareness, inferential thinking, problem solving, tactile feedback of a partner and repeating movement to retrieve clearer sensations. Fortin refers to two types of knowledge – procedural and declarative and

describes how procedural predominates in dance as it is knowledge in action functions as a tool for translating one's own perceptions. As a teacher Warwick, provided verbal, visual and sensory cues which include signals from the vestibular system, muscle tendons and joints which can detect effort, tension, direction, vibration, joint action, velocity and balance.

13. Fortin, S., Trudelles, S. et Rail, G. (2009) *Danse et Santé, du corps intime au corps social*, Presses de l'université du Québec.

This chapter by Sylvie Fortin and Pamela Newell is based on observation and research done on the variety of interpretive and choreographic styles used by different choreographers during the Montréal Danse choreographic workshop in 2007. The researchers observed rehearsals and interviewed selected participants after the workshop and developed two grids to analyze their data. The first identifies the types of roles asked of dancers within a choreographic process, which Fortin and Newell group into the categories of: executor, interpreter, participant and improviser. As the name suggests the executor is asked to execute precisely defined movement tasks, in a specified style. The interpreter is given a measure of freedom within set choreography, while the participant plays a role in generating the choreography itself. Finally the improviser generates the performance based on parameters defined by the choreographer. The researchers also identified the many strategies choreographers employ when generating material, as well as manipulating pre-existing choreography. Fortin and Newell's model of composition practices also includes: Preparation- Generation- Construction and Deconstruction.

14. Franklin, E. (2014) *Dance Imagery for Technique and Performance*

"The marriage of technical expertise and experiential and imagery skills is a fruitful one, because dancing is more than executing steps. The steps are vehicles to convey information about shape, alignment, rhythm and musicality, space and direction, weight, flow, and movement quality and initiation among other things."(Franklin 2014, xiii). This book is a handbook for dance teachers, choreographers and dancers complete with many illustrations. The first few chapters give the historical context and scientific justification for the use of Imagery. Franklin identifies the many different uses for Imagery, such as to heighten aspects of awareness, such as: spatial, embodied and qualitative and as a way to create, rehearse and rejuvenate. He articulates the difference between trying to achieve externalized forms, versus experiencing the body in motion, echoing this reoccurring theme of the difference between the technical dancer and the experiential one. (Franklin 2014, xii) He mentions improvisation as tool for

“discovering new movement qualities and choreographic ideas.” (Franklin 2014, xiii) and proposes using visualisation to integrate hidden inner mechanisms of our perceptions and physicality, offering concrete tools specific to dance technique: coordination & movement efficiency, alignment, flexibility and expressivity, such as:

- Focus and concentration
- Body Awareness, enhanced embodiment
- Memory
- Setting and attaining goals, increasing self-esteem and confidence
- Relaxation and Regeneration
- Altering and improving moods/emotional states, increasing motivation, modulating arousal
- Preparation for audition or performance
- Problem solving, prepare for eventualities
- Create game plans, choreography (cognitive imagery)
- Enhance creativity & musicality, cues/transitions
- Prevent and heal injuries, manage pain

15. Halprin, L., Hester, R. T, Jr. and Mullen, D. (1999). Lawrence Halprin (Interview). *Places* 12(2) *Escholarship*, University of California.

In this interview conducted by Dee Mullen and Randolph Hester, architect and designer Lawrence Halprin discusses his systems for organizing and orchestrating collaborative design workshops. Halprin details his approach for leading collaborative design workshops, which is encapsulated in the RSVP cycle, which stands for Resource, Scores, Value-action and Performance. He initially developed this system to help his wife, influential choreographer and teacher Anna Halprin, teach an existing dance to new performers. He went on to use the format to lead design workshops around the principles of action and participation, generated by experience, action, communication, and sensory emotion using all the senses – not just talking. He discusses how facilitating a workshop and designing require different modes of thinking, but both require the ability to bring out the best in people is a talent. (49) He sees workshops as opportunities for exchange, developing creativity and learning processes for all involved.

Resources: The first phase of the work involves assessing the objective and subjective resources present. For example objective resources could be the economic base, location, physical conditions, while subjective resources could be the agendas, feelings, attitudes and expectations of the participants.

Score (Periodization): Location, schedule, people, elements, tasks. Create an experience so that people will understand the elements themselves, rather than just by being told. An example is an *Awareness walk*, where people walk around a site together, an experience that helps create common ground and references. « I don't have to say to people that this has to be taken out. I have to get them there so they will themselves understand. » (Halprin, 1999, p.45)

Valuation – People have a chance to express themselves and be listened to. Worked in small groups not just alone. Come to a creative consensus as opposed to a compromise.

Performances – Halprin makes the distinction between his participatory workshops and a final design, where the collaborators have been chosen for their specific affinities and talents and the designer has a final executive decision and responsibility to realize/render the project.

Halprin's RSVP cycles are a useful model for my project for creating a structure where by collaborators pass through an experience, in my case a practice and discussions to understand the basis for the work. It incorporates mechanisms for everyone in the process to be heard and to learn from each other's perspectives and work towards defining and realizing a common end. It acknowledges the differences between facilitation and design that are at the heart of the challenges of being a choreographer.

16. Kearns, L.W. (2010). Somatics in Action, How “ I Fell Three-dimensional and Real”, Improves Dance Education and Training, *Journal of Dance Education* 10(2), 35-40

This article describes an advanced technique and Somatics class taught by the author at North Carolina University. She begins by making the case for Somatic education as a part of dance training, citing her own observations of students in her program prior to Somatics being introduced in to the program, as having skills but lacking nuance, three dimensionality. In the article briefly explains the history of somatic education and why she has chosen to create a curriculum composed of Pilates, Yoga, the Bartenieff fundamentals and Ideokinesis. Using Pilates to create core strength in the abdominals and intrinsic muscle of the spine complemented by the Bartenieff fundamentals to practice deep motor patterns initiated from the core and periphery. Yoga creates awareness of breath and alignment and Ideokinesis integrates anatomical imagery also facilitates a holistic integration of many levels of sensation. The article includes feedback from students regarding their progress using the techniques taught in the class, which were also

supported by Kearns observations as a teacher. This article presents arguments to justify the use of somatic techniques, as well as describing detailed ways of integrating them.

17. Kirsh, D. (2010) Thinking with the body, David Kirsh, Department of Cognitive Science, UCSC

In this article, professor David Kirsh discusses the results of his research the cognitive processes present in two types of movement practices used in dance known as *marking* and *riffing*. *Marking* is used by dancers to go through choreography while conserving energy, while *riffing* is used by choreographers to prepare movements prior to teaching them to others. It appears however that both may also use the body for cognition and problem solving through the transference of form one format to another. The *riffing* choreographers do to practice movements prior to teaching them, also serves to spawn new ideas and generate variations. Marking, allows dancers the possibility to practice movement pathways without out the performance pressure of dancing 'full out' or being completely in their heads, "because marking behaves like a physical representation it can serve as a vehicle for thought" (Kirsh 2010, 15). Kirsh's research demonstrates that specific types of moving can be used to transfer information gathered through one sensorial pathway to another, and that movement itself is a type of thinking, not just pure physical process devoid of acts of cognition.

18. Myers, T. (2009). Introduction: Laying the Railbed, Chapter 1: The World according to Fascia Chapter 2: The rules of the game, Introduction: laying the railbed *Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists* (p. 1-12). (p. 13-64). (p. 65- 72). London: Elsevier Limited.

Keywords: Tensegrity, Holistic System

In his introduction and Chapter 1: The world according to fascia, Thomas Myers outlines the sources and reasoning behind his Anatomy Train's theory, originally generated through workshops and published in the Journal of Bodywork & Movement Therapies. He proposes a theory that expands the prevalent biomechanical view of the body, by applying Buckminster Fuller's principle of *Tensegrity*, to the musculo-fascial-skeletal system, by way of Myofascial meridians lines. Much of what we know about anatomy has been gleaned from dissection, where fascia in its true form is often rendered invisible because it has either been cut away or has dried up. This has led to a dominant misconception of muscles functioning in isolation. "We need to represent our spatial body and endless web: skin, muscles & cells." (Myers 2013, 58). Myers proposes that we move away from a reductionist point of view, and towards a

paradigm shift that acknowledges the body as a complex interwoven organism in dialogue with its surrounding environment, applying notions from Biomechanics, Marshall McLuhan's Systems theory and Einstein's theories of relativity. He acknowledges influences such as: Ida Rolf, Diane Lee's application of Andry Vleeming's Myofascial slings and Raymond Dart's article on Spiral Chains influenced by Alexander technique. He also recognises that other researchers have observed similar phenomena, namely the 1930's German anatomist, Hoepke, the 'Chaînes musculaires' of Meziere, Busquet, Tittle and Chaitow, and finally the clinical applications of neuromuscular techniques by orthopaedist Stephen Levin, MD; who also introduced the idea of Biotensegrity over 30 years ago.

The body is made up of three tubular systems: collagen fibril, neuron and capillary, that all transmit data. "The fascial system conveys mechanical information, the interplay of tension and compression, along the fibrous net, the gluey proteoglycans, and even the cells themselves." (Myers 2013, p.33). The nervous system reacts based on the frequency of waves it senses through binary code and "the circulatory net carries chemical information around the body in a fluid medium." (Myers 2013, p.33) The MFS reacts quicker than even the nervous system to pressure and an argument can be made that it is conscious system that generate a tensile field through pre-movements, to augment quicker reaction time, which can be linked to perception and the kinaesthetic 6th sense (Myers 2013, p.58). « By 'pre-stressing' a tensegrity structure, that is, putting a particular strain on it beforehand, we notice that (1) many members, both compressional and tensional, tend to align along the lines of the strain, and (2) the structure gets 'firmer' – prepared to handle loading without much changing shape. » (Myers 2013, p.53).

« Ideal individual posture and alignment are based on genetic, epigenetic, personal use factors, as 'the whole system' can be tuned according to demands made upon it. » (Myers 2013, 59). Myers work aligns with an evolving conception of the body as hypothesised by Merleau-Ponty, substantiated by theorists such as Berthoz and Rolf; and integrated into Dance pedagogy by Odile Rouquet and Hubert Godard. This goal of striving to balance out the muscular skeletal system can have positive impact on strength, alignment and efficiency, and consequently prevent injuries. Understanding that these systems are malleable and shaped by our activities justifies the use of somatic and improvisation techniques to help prepare responsiveness in dancer for the work there are going to help generate and perform. Seeing the body as a holistic system influences not only training, also deepens my understanding as to why certain somatic and improvisational work is effective to prepare the body to generate specific types of qualities and states. For example that pressure placed on one area, inevitably resonates through the whole organism:

the fluid and nervous systems, voluntary/involuntary consciousness and interdependent muscular-skeletal system.

19. Launay, I. (2001). Le don du geste. *Protée*, 29(2), 85–96 <https://doi.org/10.7202/030629ar>

Through a series of interviews Launay examines the concept of othering in dance and hypothesise how instead of enforcing conformity dance practitioners can accept difference.

20. Noland, C. (2009). *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

In *Agency and Embodiment*, author Carrie Noland examines multiple perspectives on the nature of human embodiment from anthropological, philosophical, sociological, biological and artistic sources. In the first few chapters of the book she contextualises various French authors associated with Phenomenology to trace the roots of Contemporary theories of *Embodiment*. Building on the physical, social conditioning identified as ‘*techniques of the body*’ by Marcel Mauss to advance her theory that the execution of conditioned *Gestures*, can also produce variations that are responsible for evolutionary leaps in social practices. “The tradition initiated by Mauss and nourished in many dance ethnographies teaches that *socially acquired* techniques of the body bring biological bodies into being.” (Noland, 2009, p.5). Deconstructing the perspective that knowledge gleaned through physical experience is accumulative and builds up our bank of potential actions and gestures in the world, as well as the unique physical background that forms the basis for our individual identities. Noland incorporates Leroi-Gourhan work on the *Inscription* of physical memories, *Gesture* as a means of shared collective social memory (Graves 1994) and the idea of the *fond/habitus*, proposed by philosophers Bergson & Husserl and developed by Merleau-Ponty. Later on, she considers the artist Michaux’s experimentation with *gesture* as well as Judith Butler’s theory of *the resistance of the body*. Noland differentiates her theory from Foucault’s in that she is interested in ‘differential variations rather than oppositional’ and sees a broad potential for ‘normative behavior as well, as well as deviations’. She also notes that the acquisition of social conditioning can be imposed from institutions or other sources of power, but also sought out by individuals, as in dance training.

In her research, Carrie Noland identifies “determinist, constructivist theory that depicts subjects as pliant material on which culture inscribes and other neovitalist approach that tends to exaggerate the subject’s capacity to express and fashion itself.” (Noland, 2009, p. 8). Breaking down the division between ‘empirical

research and poststructuralist theory' with information sourced from neurobiology, cognitive psychology to historical and psychological analyses, to prove the existence of a sixth sense. Using the example of Kathryn Linn Guert's study of a community in Ghana who had a word for it called seselelame: feeling in and through the body, which is as important for agency in the world as visual and auditory information. (Noland, 2009, pp.12). The also goes to the heart of J.J. Gibson's notion of ecology (afferent) in that it makes biological organisms affected by their environment in both a historical and social sense. She notes that the kinaesthetic sense is a valued aspect of reality both around the globe and within western sub-cultures. 1930's New York dance critic John Martin's concept of Kinaesthetic empathy has been thoroughly integrated into the work of many post-modern contemporary dance makers. "Dancers and movement practitioners explicitly credit kinaesthetic experience with the capacity to produce skilled bodies while inspiring audiences to resonate to dance and other movement performances in acts of empathy that may have ethical, socializing function in human communities." (Noland, 2009, p.13)

21. Rafferty, S. (2010). Considerations for integrating fitness into dance training, *Journal of dance medicine & science : official publication of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science*, 14(2), 45-9. ISSN: 1089-313X.

In this article, Sonia Rafferty, a contributor to the field of Dance Science working at Laban, London, examines research done over the last 20 years that points to dancers' low levels of physical fitness and high rates of injury, (Koutedakis 2001). In this piece she examines ways of supplementing dance technique classes using techniques from sport and somatic education in order to tackle by improving "movement efficiency, performance excellence, and longevity in the field." (Rafferty 2010, p.45). Rafferty addresses resistance on the part of the dance profession in adopting these types of strategies, while Contemporary choreography continuously pushes physical stamina further and further and would do well to consider physiological implications of this type of work. She sites T.O. Bompas, a recognized authority on *Periodization* in sport, who observes that technique in sport is continuously evolving, and that the field of Dance Science can potentially help dance training to do the same by addressing the areas of fitness, health, safe practice, teaching, and optimal performance. In his introduction to *Périodisation de l'entraînement*, Bompas identifies the components of fitness that when combined result in muscular endurance, endurance and speed, agility and mobility. He also notes that different components build at different rates, where flexibility can be gained from day to day; strength improves week to week, while endurance advances year to year (Bompas 2003, p. 5). Rafferty, focuses less on the gradual implementation of practices contributing

to fitness and more on ways in which these concepts can be incorporated into existing dance technique class formats over days and weeks. The fear of adopting a scientific model that measures 'physiology over artistry' and supplants the aesthetic, perceptual and interpretive practices that develop dancers and their bodies is examined in the case of resistance training, which has been seen as diminishing aesthetic appearance and flexibility, but which can actually prevent osteoporosis in female athletes and dancers (Rafferty 2010, 47).

Rafferty proposes seeing dancers as artists practicing mind-body exercise and surveys the different points of view of various experts on how training can be adapted while preserving artistic integrity in her article. Dance as a form of exercise is intermittent and high intensity and tends to emphasise coordination and flexibility, with strength, power, anaerobic and aerobic training largely missing from the equation - though contemporary class content covers a wide spectrum depending on the teacher. Due to the number of tasks already present in dance class, she refers to Jan Ekert in "Harnessing the Wind" recommendation leave class alone, while supplementing curriculum to include somatics and conditioning. She also mentions Chmelar and Fitt's dance training pyramid and envisions a similar combination of technique class, somatics & conditioning. "Technique class concentrates on skill development, providing general strength, endurance, flexibility, alignment, coordination, and neural integration. Somatics includes body therapies, guided imagery, neural patterning, proprioception, and constructive rest. Conditioning concerns the elements of fitness and personal development." (Rafferty 2010, 45). Recommendations for class:

- Longer uninterrupted warm up, center and travelling exercises
- Less rest in between exercises
- Familiar movement combination repeated over consecutive classes
- Rafferty's studied once a week dance specific cardio training 20-30 minutes
- Strength and power training with *theraband* replicating the specificity of movements direction in space and coordination pattern (Franklin 1996)
- Gradual and systematic plyometric training to promote elasticity and strength in jumps

22. Rathle, K. (2010). *Investigating the effects of applied somatic principles on perceived stage presence* (mémoire de diplôme de deuxième cycle inédit en science de danse). Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, Londres, UK. Consulté à l'adresse <http://karinerathle.com/dance-science/stage-presence/>.

Karine Rathle's masters' thesis explores the perceived stage presence of four dancers. Karine Rathle asserts that stage presence inhabits the dancer (Rathle 2010, p. 8), and also observes that a « dancer needs to be comfortable with movement execution before thinking of performance » (Rathle 2010, p. 10). Rathle's thesis examines how breathing, imagery and time can help dancers have confidence, merge the different levels of their beings and create meaning by finding pleasure through their actions.

23. Reason, M. and Reynolds, D. (2010, Winter) Kinesthesia, Empathy, and Related Pleasures: An Inquiry into Audience Experiences of Watching Dance. *Dance Research Journal*, Volume 42, Number 2, pp. 49-75 Cambridge University Press about this article: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/402985>

This paper is a part of a larger body of research questioning the concept of Kinesthetic Empathy, using interviews gathered with audience members after performances to gauge the motivation, expectation and responses evoked by watching dance. Influential dance critic, John Martin, who wrote for the New York Times between the 1930-60's, coined the term Kinesthetic Empathy. Martin also used the words contagion, Metakinesis and muscular sympathy to discuss the transmission of sensation through observation of modern dance. "He argued that " the modern dancer, instead of employing the cumulative sources of academic tradition, cuts through directly to the source of all dancing" (Martin 1963, 138) which was the connection between movement and emotional states." (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 54). He also discussed the faculty of *Inner mimicry*, and hypothesized that observers are not passive, but capable of experiencing the same neural and muscular pathways as the dancers themselves. The article points out that Martin was presumptuous in his assumptions that individuals have the same emotional associations to movements, but also explains his role in constructing new ways of perceiving dance for audiences that were used to deriving meaning from story and classical technique. The authors quote Mark Franko, who questions if it is possible for choreographers and dancers to control the kinesthetic experience that they are communicating?

They also make the distinction between empathy: an automatic capacity for the muscular and psychic experience of taking on the emotions/sensations/feelings of another, versus sympathy: which is projecting one's own values and experience onto another. Reason and Reynolds research speaks to the specificity of experience based on the spectators' knowledge of a given form. How they feel when viewing the choreography has to do with their knowledge of the form and the pleasure derived from witnessing it. Reynolds and Reason note a spectrum of motivations and types of pleasure depending on

a desire for intimacy of experience or distant abstraction – from the performers or themselves, as well as preference and knowledge of different styles. The pertinent questions raised by their research for my work are:

How to go about sharing the codes with which we construct the dance, the work? Is this a justification for a “coexistence of different styles” that includes codes from different techniques/forms as well as borrowing from every day gestures. If dance is taught and learned through mimicry does it mean that we don’t share the same associations when feeling and moving and what tools can be used to create empathy?

24. Smart, J., 2014, *New Dramaturgy, The Feeling of Devising*, Cochrane, & Trencsényi. (2014). *New dramaturgy : international perspectives on theory and practice*. Bloomsbury.

In the chapter *The Feeling of Devising*, written for the volume, *New Dramaturgy*, writer Jackie Smart examines recent strides in psychology and neuroscience research that dispel the Cartesian notion of dualism and confirm that human thought and feeling are inextricably linked. She refers to Damasio’s 2006 publication: *Descartes’ Error* where he states that emotions translate the ongoing life state into the language of the mind and are tools for self-regulation in order to maintain a stable state of homeostasis and also draws on research done by performance scholars such as by McConachie Hart: *Performance and Cognition* (2006) *Engaging Audiences* (2008), as well as John Lutterbie (2006), Rhonda Blair (2006), James Thompson (2009) and Nicola Shaughnessy (2012). “The central theory of the interdependence of cognition and emotion is now widely accepted...The theory draws on a supposition that emotions are ancient in evolutionary terms, they exist to help us survive, thrive and procreate; they protect us from danger by alerting us to a threat and encourage useful behaviour with reward of pleasure.” (Smart, 2014, p. 103).

25. Wyon, M. (2010). Preparing to perform: periodization and dance, *Journal of dance medicine & science: official publication of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science*, 14(2), 67-72. ISSN: 1089-313X.

Matthew Wyon, is a professor of Sports Medicine at the School of Sport, Performing Arts and Leisure at the University of Wolverhampton, as well as the Jerwood Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries, and the Laban Center in London, UK. His article, *Preparing to Perform, Periodization and Dance*, which appeared in the *Journal of Dance Medicine and Science* in 2010, gives a background of historical and recent research in periodization before offering hypothetical models that have been partially applied in dance schools and by professional companies. Referencing the higher rate of injury reported by professional dancers than in the most “strenuous of contact sports”. Wyon proposes models of periodization “to prevent overtraining and its links to injury, while improving the dancer’s readiness to perform optimally.” (Wyon. 2010, p.67). The main advances in sports training he proposes applying to dance are the adoption of training that addresses all physiological capacities and the incorporation of rest and recuperation within yearly, monthly and weekly schedules.

Periodization was initially developed by the Soviet physicians L. Marveev, N. Ozolin and supplemented by V. Verkhoshansky, an organised, holistic approach where the « education, upbringing, teaching and the growth of the athlete’s functional potential...is developed on a pscho- physiological basis that includes physiological, psychological, biomechanical and skill elements. » (Wyon 2010, 67). Matveev proposed a program geared towards peaking just prior to competition that focuses on skill, biomotor abilities and psychological traits. Verkhoshansky’s observed the adaptations of athletes’ metabolites: creatine kinase, blood lactate, serum testosterone concentration and cortisol, as indicators of how they were reacting to increased training loads. For both, *overcompensation is a key factor in both Marveev’s and Verkhoshansky’s theories – when a new stress is introduced the body adapts and when the stress is removed the body regenerates* (Wyon 2010). Training increases in frequency and load in relationship to the individual rate of adaptation, if this rate is not respected, overtraining occurs, symptoms of which are decreased performance and susceptibility to injury.

Wyon’s perspective in no way devalues dance, stating that the majority of dancers are highly skilled artistic athletes (Wyon, 2010, p. 67). He does however make the case that the physiological reality of the bodies needs don’t disappear just because artistic concerns are present. Wyon suggests artistic perfection has no limiting factors limits, while human capacities do. Dancing training, he notes, gives a lot of attention to skill development, flexibility and coordination, possibly to the detriment of the other key physical attributes such as endurance, power, and aerobic and anaerobic capacities. Secondary to skill but vital, in order to create greater physical and mental reserves, so that energy can be focused on

performance are the components found in Verkhoshansky's model of periodization that include training for: aerobic, anaerobic, flexibility, strength and power parameters. From a previous article, Carr and Wyon point to the necessity for *teachers or choreographers to recognise when quality of movement starts to deteriorate and* create rest periods and overcome the professions tendency towards overtraining which leads to burn out (Wyon 2010, p.70). Coordination and concentration decrease rapidly after 30 minutes, making long uninterrupted rehearsals counterproductive. The final key element to implementation of these ideas is communication between rehearsal directors, choreographers and teachers in order to coordinate a balance between work and rest in terms of the energy output asked of a dancer through the day and week.

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